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A LETTER TO Dr MEAD CONCERNING SOME ANTIQUITIES IN BERKSHIRE,

Particularly ſhewing that The WHITE HORSE, which gives name to the Vale, is a Monument of the Weſt-Saxons, made in memory of a great Victory obtained over the Danes A. D. 871.

By FRANCIS WISE B.D. Fell. of Trin. Coll. Oxon.

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THE ANNALS

OF

ST. PETER'S

IN

THE EAST

A LETTER TO Dr MEAD.

SIR,

I SHALL make no Apology, for what is contained in the following ſheets, nor for the method which I have taken, of introducing them to the publick. To reſtore things loſt to their proper owners, is an act of juſtice; and the ſubject, I flatter myſelf, will be a reaſonable excuſe for the liberty, which I have taken, in addreſſing them to one, who from being the greateſt maſter, is become the greateſt patron, of ancient learning, that the preſent age can boaſt of.

The new light, which almoſt every branch of learning has received from the labours of our countrymen, to the no ſmall credit of this nation abroad, muſt be acknowledged to be chiefly owing to the encouragement, and direction, which you have been pleaſed to give to perſons of genius, and application. But the particular honour which you claim, is, That, in conformi-

ty to your illuſtrious patterns, Varro and Atticus, after being throughly verſed in all the learning of other nations, you have not thought it beneath you, to ſearch into the antiquities of your own. Agreeing in this with Tully, [a] "That the knowledge "of ones own country, is neceſſary to compleat the character of "a ſcholar."

The ſtudy of our national antiquities has till of late wanted the encouragement, which it deſerved. We have delighted, after the example of our barbarous anceſtors, the Northern nations, in wandering about, and in ſeeking adventures in foreign lands, without attempting to cultivate, and enrich our own; which having perpetually been the ſcene of important actions in great variety from the earlieſt times, would have produced, an incredible ſtore of literature, and ſo much the more deſerving our pains, as it more nearly concerns us. Every ſcience has it's diſcouragements, and none perhaps more than that of Antiquities. The paths are frequently untrod, either leading over dry and barren deſarts, or through the perplexities of woods and coverts. Some who have no taſte for this ſort of learning, and are therefore not well affected to it, have, from the uncertainty there is in many things, concluded nothing certain; and from a few inſtances of perſons, who have been bewildered, and loſt, in this journey, would fain diſſwade all others from entring upon it.

The diſlike often expreſſed to the ſtudy of Antiquities, might however more eaſily be born, if it proceeded only from thoſe, who are at enmity with learning in general: for Ignorance is intereſted to have perpetual bickerings with ſcience. But to hear this ſort of Learning decried by gentlemen well verſed in other

[a] *Mihi quidem nulli ſatis eruditi videntur, quibus noſtra ignota ſunt.* Cicero de Fin. Lib. 1.

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branches of knowledge, is to *Receive wounds in the houſe of our friends*. The genius of men is by the author of nature wonderfully diverſified, and prepared for different enquiries; and though learned men take different paths, they all agree in the purſuit after truth. And if there are ſome who can ſee no beauty, but in what themſelves are in love with, yet it would be much to the credit of their good breeding, if they would treat with civility, what may appear to them leſs agreeable.

But the great deference and regard, which the moſt elegant and polite times have always paid to this ſtudy, and the high [a] encomiums, which they have been pleaſed to beſtow upon it, are a ſufficient anſwer to all cavils whatſoever. As on the contrary, it may be ſaid, that the darkeſt and moſt illiterate, confeſſedly ſo, were thoſe, which diſcarded ancient Hiſtory, and thereby loſt their beſt and ſureſt guide. So that the preſent age, notwithſtanding all it's boaſted light and knowledge, ſhould it run into a contempt of Antiquity, would want one of the moſt infallible characteriſticks of learning, and true politeneſs.

There is indeed leſs reaſon every day to fear, that the nation in general ſhould become liable to this imputation. The new edition of that immortal work *The Britannia*, ſo adorned throughout, by the labours of it's Right Reverend and very learned tranſlator, and others, ſeems to have inſpired our natives with a new deſire, of prying more cloſely into our remoteſt antiquities. This diſpoſition has been cheriſhed in them, by the countenance and example of perſons of diſtinction, and of none ſo much as

[a] *Vetera Majeſtas quædam, &, ut ſic dixerimus, Religio commendat.* Quintil. Inſtit. *Veterrima quæque, (ut ea vina, quæ vetuſtatem ferunt) eſſe debent ſuaviſſima.* Cicero de Amicitia c. 19. *Affert Vetuſtas omnibus in rebus longinqua obſervatione incredibilem ſcientiam.* Idem de Divinat. Lib. 1. 49. *Et primum quidem omni antiquitate; quæ, quo propius aberat ab ortu & divina progenie, hoc melius ea fortaſſe, quæ erant vera, cernebat.* Idem Tuſc. Quæſt. Lib. 1. c. 12. *Neſcire quid, antea quam natus ſis, acciderit, id eſt ſemper eſſe puerum.* Idem de Orat.

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yourſelf. Young gentlemen have been taught, to reckon this ſtudy amongſt their chiefeſt perſonal accompliſhments. A Society of Antiquaries has been formed, whoſe united endeavours, promiſe not only, to bring to light thouſands of new particulars, relating to our Engliſh Hiſtory, but to correct the falſities of as many old ones.

The fruits of this eſtabliſhment are already viſible to every one, who is in the leaſt converſant with theſe matters. I ſhall therefore only add, that, with ſubmiſſion I think, it might ſtill be made more uſeful, if ſome of the moſt knowing members would form themſelves into ſmall parties, each party at their leiſure undertaking a diſtinct province, and in the nature of a travelling Committee, inſpecting one or more Counties; in order to give directions for ſuch enquiries, as ſhall be thought proper to be made, and to receive informations, not from the vulgar inhabitants alone, but from gentlemen of learning and curioſity, of which ſort, I preſume, every County will afford many.

From this new face of affairs have proceeded thoſe ſurprizing diſcoveries, which, without derogating from Mr Camden's merit, may be ſaid to give a new luſtre to the Hiſtory of this Iſle. Allowing him to be ſtiled the Father of Antiquaries; his book, [a] *The Common Sun at which all others have lighted their little torches*: yet it muſt be owned, that his Succeſſors have made ſo good uſe of the light, which they have borrowed from him, that they have in ſome caſes even ſeen farther than himſelf. This is apparent to any one who conſiders only the abovementioned additions to the Britannia, without any of thoſe uſeful diſcoveries made ſince by later writers.

[a] See Bp Nicolſon's Hiſtorical Library.

British Antiquities.

It may not be foreign to my preſent purpoſe to inſtance briefly in the ſeveral periods of our more early Hiſtory and Antiquities, and to conſider, what further uſe may ſtill be made of them. If any part was obſcure, the Britiſh muſt have been remarkably ſo: the times preceding Julius Cæſar's invaſion being a dark, and impenetrable, wild, without letters, and almoſt without monuments, ſave what later antiquaries have diſcovered to belong to it. Since Cæſar's time the affairs of this Iſland are indeed ſcattered up and down in the Roman Hiſtorians, but merely with a view to illuſtrate their own actions. Mr Camden has ranged the firſt inhabitants in order by their ancient names, according to Cæſar, Tacitus, Ptolemy and others; but to ſettle their boundaries with tolerable exactneſs, ſeems a task reſerved for the preſent times. The rites and cuſtoms of the Druids have been traced out more curiouſly than heretofore. Stonehenge in Wiltſhire the moſt talked of monument of this claſs in the Iſland, is mentioned by Camden without accounting for the true meaning of it; for now, I preſume, it is univerſally allowed to be a Britiſh Temple. The more remarkable, as well as the more ancient, one at [a] Abery, or Avebury, in the ſame County, was not, if I remember right, diſcovered till after Mr Camden's death. Rollriche-ſtones by [b] Camden thought to be a Daniſh monument, is now reckoned amongſt this ſort: of all which and more, we may expect ſtill a much better account, from a very learned and celebrated [c] pen. So that upon the whole, I cannot think that any branch of our Antiquities has received greater [d] improvements than this.

[a] See a Deſcription of this by the Rev. Mr T. Twining. 4to. Lond. 1723. The author of which has endeavoured unſucceſsfully, to prove it a work of the Romans. [b] In Oxfordſhire. [c] Dr Stukely. See the Preface to his *Itinerarium Curioſum*. Fol. Lond. 1724. [d] See Mr Aubrey's and Mr Edw. Llhwyd's *Additions to the Britannia*, and MSS. Collections.

Roman. The Roman Remains in this Iſle, by which I underſtand, thoſe too of the Britains Latinized, vaſtly exceed the bounds of Mr Camden's deſign; and can never be ſufficiently accounted for by a ſingle perſon, even of the greateſt abilities. The Itinerary of Antoninus was his chief guide; and the uſe, he made of it, was prodigious; but this has been obſerved to be [a] *an endleſs fund of enquiry*, where any one is at liberty to form conjectures, and by virtue of which, ſeveral authors have attempted new ſchemes, and ſometimes, not without good reaſon, have ventured to differ from him. The anonymous geographer of [b] Ravenna was not diſcovered in his time, who has very much aſſiſted the learned of this age in their enquiries. The courſe of the Roman roads has been more accurately ſurveyed. Their Camps, Barrows, Amphitheatres, Walls, Stations, with towns of leſs note, will find ſufficient employment for all the antiquaries of our times, and, for ought I know, of ſeveral Centuries hereafter. [c] Mr Horſeley's book it muſt be acknowledged is a noble ſupplement to the *Britannia*; but I expect to ſee his deſign enlarged, to twice the bulk of the preſent Volume. If I may be allowed to make any judgment from what has fallen in my own way, There are remains not yet taken notice of, ſufficient to make good, even more than I aſſert. If ſuch a Committee, as I juſt now mentioned, was formed for theſe parts, I myſelf, whoſe travels have rarely exceeded the neighbourhood of Oxfordſhire, and who have as ſeldom went out of my road upon this errand, will undertake to direct them to no leſs than three Roman towns with ſufficient remains, (one

tions. Mr Rowland's *Mona Antiqua Reſtaurata.* 4to. Dublin. 1723. Mr Baxter's *Gloſſarium Antiquitatum Britannicarum.* 8vo. Lond. 1719. *a* Dr Stukely *Itin. Cur.* Pag. 169. *b* *Anonymi Ravennatis Geographiæ Lib. V. cum notis Placidi Porcheron.* 8vo. Pariſ. 1688. *c* *Britannia Romana.* Fol. Lond. 1732.

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of which too may juſtly challenge the name of a city, and which I ſuſpect to be the true BRANAVIS of Ravennas) not taken notice of by Mr Camden, Dr Plot, Bp Kennet or Dr Stukely, and this in a corner of that County, which ſeems to have been travelled over by all of them.

Here I cannot but obſerve, that the ſtudy of this branch of our antiquities is not only entertaining, but vaſtly uſeful and improving; as it inſenſibly leads us to an acquaintance with the affairs and cuſtoms of the greateſt conquerors, that ever gave laws to mankind. I need not mention the pleaſure which ariſes in the breaſt of every generous antiquary, upon ſurveying the ruined manſions of this venerable people: [a] "For whether it "be a weakneſs ariſing from nature or miſtake; it is certain, "that we are often more ſenſibly affected with the ſight of the "places where they lived, than even with a relation of the great "actions performed by them." To this we may add the particular pleaſure which this period ought to afford to every Engliſh mind, in beholding our Countrymen laid under a greater tye than that of arms, namely of duty and gratitude to their conquerors. To ſee the Iſland, as it were, emerging out of barbarity, and improving in all the Roman arts of politeneſs, and civility. To view it's woody dens and caverns changed into buildings of the beſt taſte, and moſt exquiſite workmanſhip; it's wild and uncultivated deſarts, into regular paſturage, and all the beautiful ſcenes of agriculture; Manufactures of the moſt uſeful kinds every day introduced; Commerce promoted; and in ſhort the whole nation taught how to value, and improve, it's riches. This, I ſay, to a mind ſincerely affected with the love

[a] *Natura nobis hoc datum, an errore quodam, ut cum ea loca videamus, in quibus memoria dignos viros acceperimus multos eſſe verſatos, magis moveamur, quam ſi quando eorum ipſorum, aut facta audiamus, aut ſcriptum aliquod legamus.* Cicero de Fin. Lib. IV.

of ones country, is a proſpect of the higheſt delight and complacency.

Saxon and Daniſh.

Notwithſtanding the warlike genius of the Saxons; they did not want, after a time, a diſpoſition to learning, in order to preſerve the great actions of their anceſtors. And here our Hiſtory may be ſaid to begin; we having nothing that can with propriety be called ſuch, before this period. But the byaſs in them to ſuperſtition, which prevailed not only here, but over all Europe, for four or five centuries together, has in great meaſure deprived us, of the good uſe, that might otherwiſe have been made of their talents. The lives of their Saints with a long detail of their [a] miracles, which were now grown ſo common that they almoſt ceaſed to be ſuch, left no other employment for their beſt wits. This is particularly to be lamented in the caſe of Bede; His ſubject, the affairs of the Church, naturally led him to this way of writing; to proſtitute his pen to the humour of the age, by delivering down for fact, what he ſeems ſcarce to have believed himſelf. For tho' [b] he profeſſeth to write nothing, without the warrant of tradition, and common fame; yet at the ſame time he beſpeaks his reader's pardon, for what ſhould be found contrary to truth in his hiſtory. Had he attempted the civil Hiſtory of this nation, upon the plan of the Greek and Roman Hiſtorians; or had he undertaken a compleat Hiſtory of the World upon the ſame model, (for what was he not capable of undertaking?) I doubt not but his performance, would have ſucceeded, as well

a Qualis fuit iſtorum temporum Theologia, talis & Hiſtoria. Nam in Hiſtoricis monumentis, miracula ut plurimum utramque paginam conficiebant, vel à Sanctis vel ab imaginibus, vel à reliquiis edita. Caſaubon. Proleg. in Exercit. in Baron. *b Lectorem ſuppliciter obſecro, ut ſi quæ in his quæ ſcripſimus, aliter quam ſe veritas habet, poſita repererit, non hoc nobis imputet; qui (quæ vera lex Hiſtoriæ eſt,) ſimpliciter ea quæ fama vulgante collegimus, ad inſtructionem poſteritatis, literis mandare ſtuduimus.* Ep. Præf. ad Hiſt. Eccl.

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as could have been wiſhed, and have been admired with the moſt finiſhed writings of the ancients.

Beſides Bede's hiſtory, we have written [a] accounts of theſe times in their original language, and delivered too in Chronological order, which renders them highly uſeful, and makes amends, for the ſtyle and narration, which, it muſt be confeſſed, are rude, and unadorned. The learned world is infinitely obliged to the Right Reverend and learned Prelate abovementioned, who has taken the pains to make them appear in a new, and much better, dreſs, than Mr Camden could poſſibly know them in. The Cuſtoms, as well as the Monuments and Language of this period, have likewiſe received very great light from the labours of [b] Dr Hickes, who is characterized by the beſt judge of theſe matters (and who has himſelf made conſiderable improvements in them) as [c] *Incomparably the greateſt Maſter of his ſubject, that ever yet appeared in print.*

Thoſe ſwarms of Northern Pirates, that infeſted the Weſtern parts of Europe, whom Aſſer calls Pagans, later Hiſtorians by the particular name of *Danes*, began about the latter end of the Eighth, or beginning of the Ninth, century, to gain ſettlements in this Iſland. From this time their affairs are ſo intermixt with the Saxon, that they make but one hiſtory.

Here then, it muſt be owned, notwithſtanding all the diſcoveries hitherto made, is ſtill left a large field for the antiquary to expatiate in. Here we are to ſearch for the form of our Conſtitution in Church and State; the original of our Laws: the old Geography of the Iſland; with every other uſeful particular. The materials, it is true, are coarſe, but an elegant ſtructure may yet be raiſed out of them. We muſt indeed be con-

[a] *Annales Saxonici.* 4to. Oxon. 1692. [b] *Theſaurus Linguarum Septentrionalium.* Fol. 3 Vol. Oxon. 1733. [c] Bp Nicolſon in his *Hiſtorical Library.*

tent, to be ignorant, for the moſt part, of the ſecret ſprings of actions, and other beauties, which frequently embelliſh a regular Hiſtory. We muſt be content too, if we find the narration ſo confuſed, that we are now and then left to gueſs at the event of a battle; and ſometimes, though the ſtory be ever ſo circumſtantially related, if the obſolete names of places, and perſons, leave us as much to enquire, where, and by whom, it was fought. Yet in ſpight of all theſe defects, not only the learned, but every common reader, may here diſcover things enough well worth his obſervation, and which may be of ſervice to inform his mind, and improve his conduct; which ought to be the end of all ſtudy. In the hiſtories both of Saxon, and Daniſh, Kings, we meet with ſome great examples of wiſdom, fortitude, juſtice, and clemency; that at this diſtance, and through ſuch a bad medium, we may yet perceive, deſerved at leaſt, to be tranſmitted to poſterity with more advantage: and amongſt the former, One, whom I ſhall never be afraid to compare with the greateſt names of Antiquity. You will eaſily perceive I mean King Alfred.

King Alfred. A Prince deſigned, as it were, by providence for this Period, to reſcue a nation abandoned to ignorance and ſloth, and loſt to every virtue. One that wanted no qualification, that could render him beloved by his ſubjects, and dreaded by his enemies. Under a ſickly frame of body, enjoying an active, and vigorous, mind, fitted to animate every ſpring, and movement, in the machine of government. The firſt who taught us to exert the natural ſtrength of the Iſland, in large fleets of the beſt contrived veſſels: a policy which ſucceeding princes have conſtantly thought worthy of imitation and improvement. By this means guarding againſt danger from without, whilſt he had the moſt bloudy enemies, that ever in-

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vaded this land, to contend with, in the very bowels of the kingdom. His life was almoſt one continued ſtruggle for the liberties of his people, againſt the incroachments of theſe intruders. In this cauſe, we ſee him, as every opportunity offered, expoſing his perſon, with a courage not to be parallel'd, and hardly to be excuſed from the charge of raſhneſs. Frequently with a handful of troops, the diſpirited remains of a broken kingdom, attacking large armies of veterans, inured to war and ſlaughter. Under theſe diſadvantages, ſometimes indeed beaten, but oftner victorious; eſpecially when years, and experience, had taught him the right uſe of his courage. In the intervals of peace, and even in the midſt of war, aſſiduous in promoting every art, that can ſtrengthen and adorn a government. By his own example, training the ſtout and robuſt to all the hardy exerciſes of the field; the more tender and delicate conſtitutions, noble and ignoble, to the ſtudy of the Sciences, and Arts, both liberal and mechanical; thus leaving no individual uſeleſs to the State. Protecting the whole body, in a manner agreeable to the reſt of his character, by an impartial benevolence towards all his ſubjects, that brighteſt jewel of a crown! and by a ſteady adminiſtration of juſtice, providing for the ſecurity of the weakeſt, againſt the inſults of the moſt powerful. In his private life, not taxed by Hiſtorians with any vice; a tender husband, and parent; the friend, and companion, of men of letters; learned, affable, generous; and, to conclude all, eminently pious: a particular not to be omitted, though I am but too ſenſible, to how ſmall a ſhare of merit it will entitle him with the preſent age.

Had it pleaſed the great ruler of all things to ſpare his life, till he had arrived to the common age of man; he might, in all probability, have ſettled the nation in flouriſhing and laſting

peace:

peace: for though he did not utterly extirpate the Danes, yet he reduced them to obedience whilſt he lived; and left them after his death, an eaſier conqueſt to his Son: the good effects of whoſe wiſdom and valour the Engliſh might long have enjoyed, had not the meaſure of their iniquities been compleat. For the unnatural diviſions, which ſoon after prevailed amongſt them, fomented by ambition, treachery, and the whole train of publick vices, which portend the downfall of a State, delivered them up at length, as a prey to their invaders.

Aſſer's Life of Alfred.

A life ſo full of great events, and ſo calculated for the benefit of mankind, as Alfred's was, providence took care ſhould not be loſt: but in a manner ſo ſingular, that nothing deſerves our admiration more. That among all the learned of his own ſubjects, no one ſhould be found willing to do him this ſervice; but that a ſtranger in a manner, taken from amongſt the King's enemies, a people of the moſt notorious hatred to the Saxon name, (for ſuch at that time were the Welch, and continue ſo to this day) that ſuch an one only ſhould undertake to give us the Portraiture of this great King, is not a little ſurprizing. He has performed it too, beyond what might have been expected from the rudeneſs of that age. For though it muſt be confeſſed, that the colouring is mean, if compared with that of politer times, yet the lines are ſtrong, and the likeneſs withal ſo well preſerved, that they convey to us an image of the moſt perfect monarch, that ever adorned the Engliſh throne.

Aſſer's Hiſtory then is the original, from whence ſucceeding hiſtorians have taken their ſeveral copies. And I am almoſt perſwaded, that, excepting in the laſt ſix or ſeven years of his life, (for Aſſer brings it no lower) whatever ſtrokes they have given him, which are not to be found in this, may be deemed extraneous

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and falſe, or at leaſt doubtful and inauthentick. For this reaſon, I cannot but diſtruſt ſome remarkable particulars of his life, though deliver'd by authors of good note and antiquity. [a] The ſtory of his hanging up Fourty four Judges in one year, does not ſeem conſiſtent with the character of his lenity, given by Aſſer: that he might diſplace ſo many, is much more probable. Aſſer mentions nothing of his getting acquainted with the poſture of the Danes, under the diſguiſe of a minſtrel, which gained him the battle of Edingdon; for which reaſon, though it be related by [b] Ingulfus, I can ſcarcely give more credit to it, than to another ſtory of him, viz. [c] His poſing the Abbot of Canterbury with Three Queſtions, ſeemingly unanſwerable.

Other Memorials of him.

At the ſame time I cannot but lament the loſs of ſome memorials, which poſſibly might have contributed towards giving us a clearer view of him. If after the examples of Alexander and Cæſar, he wrote *Commentaries of his own wars*, in the Saxon language, (as the [d] Chronicle publiſhed by Caxton ſeems to aſſert, and ſuch a ſort of book [e] John Fox the Martyrologiſt ſays he had ſeen) the loſs of them is not to be eſtimated. Doubtleſs of a Prince, ſo well beloved by his ſubjects, there were Traditions alſo remaining for ſeveral ages afterwards; eſpecially among the inhabitants of Somerſetſhire, Wiltſhire, and Hampſhire, once the relicks of

a This is told, with a particular mention of their crimes, by Andrew Horne in his *Mirror of Juſtices*, which book, written in French, is thought to be as old, as the time of Edward I. *b Ingulf. Hiſt.* p. 26. *c* He is the perſon meant by *King Offry* in the original ballad; tho' more modern bards have transferred the Story to King John. See *A Collection of Old Ballads.* 3 Voll. 8vo. Lond. 1723. Vol. 2. pag. 50. *d This King Alvred was a good clerc, and let make many bokes, and a boke he made in Englyſhe of adventures of Kinges, and of batayles, that had been done in the lond.* *e He* [Alfred] *alſo himſelf compiled a ſtory in the ſame* [Saxon] *ſpeech, called* THE STORIE OF ALFRED, *which both books I have ſeen, though the language I do not underſtand.* Martyrol. Vol. 1. p. 186.

his

his kingdom, the places of his reſidence, and the ſcenes of ſome of his greateſt actions. The Hiſtorian of Malmesbury ſays, [a] *in his time the people uſed to ſhew the places where he had been worſted and diſtreſſed.* And if we could recover, The Life of this King written by Thomas Dando Prior of the Carmelite Convent at Marlborough, about Three hundred years ſince, which book [b] Leland mentions, and [c] Bale ſeems to have peruſed, by quoting the beginning of it, I ſuppoſe we might find ſeveral things of this ſort, which would give further light to his Hiſtory.

The Battle of Aſhdown.

Of all his military atchievements the Battle of Aſhdown ſeems the moſt conſiderable, fought by him in the Year 871, the twenty third of his age, when he was only [d] Lievtenant under his brother King Ethelred. The account ſhews, that it was a pitched field, and a compleat victory on the ſide of the Saxons. Aſſer in relating it, aſcribes the ſucceſs to the courage and conduct of his Hero, and to the prayers of the King: who, from this Hiſtorian's account, doth not appear to have been preſent at the action. The whole army, if I underſtand him right, being led up by Alfred; tho' it had been agreed before to divide it, and each to head his particular diviſion.

"A. D. 871. Says Aſſer, the Pagans, leaving the Eaſt-Angles, "came into Weſt-Sex, and fixed their head quarters at Reading "in Berkſhire; where dividing themſelves into two parties, one "party rode out to plunder the country, the other was employ-"ed in throwing up a fortification, between the rivers Thames "and Kennet. The former was met by Ethelwolf the Earl of "Berkſhire, and, after an obſtinate reſiſtance, routed near Engle-

[a] *Oſtenduntur ab incolis loca in quibus vel malæ fortunæ copiam, vel bonæ perſenſit inopiam.* Will. Malmesb. Lib. 2. [b] *Leland de ſcriptor.* pag 448. [c] *Bale de ſcriptor.* Cent. XI. No. 53. [d] *Secundarius.* See Aſſer pag. 22.

"field.

"field. Four days after King Ethelred with his brother Alfred
"reinforced the Berkſhire troops, and thinking themſelves then
"ſtrong enough to ſtorm the fortreſs, made an attack, but were
"repulſed with loſs, and the brave Earl was killed in the en-
"gagement. Again, four days after this, the Pagans fluſhed
"with ſucceſs, came with a numerous army to Aſhdown, under
"the command of two Kings, and ſeveral Counts. King Ethel-
"red and his brother [who ſeem to have retired towards the
"Weſtern part of Berkſhire among their tenants and followers]
"had rallied their troops, aud came with an intention to meet
"them, and to make it a deciſive battle. The Pagans divided
"their army into two bodies, the two kings having the com-
"mand of one, the Counts of the other: which made it neceſ-
"ſary for the Saxons to divide themſelves in the ſame manner.
"Whilſt King Ethelred was buſied at his devotions in his tent,
"and declared that he would not quit the Service of God, for
"any worldly duty whatſoever, (which piety of the King's was
"from the ſequel judged, not to have been without it's effect)
"Alfred found it neceſſary, to begin the engagement, or to
"retire. He could not eaſily brook the latter; therefore, as
"had been before agreed, he led on the Chriſtian forces, though
"the King was not come up. Aſſer is very particular in men-
"tioning, how the Pagans had got the higher ground, and how
"the battle was begun upon a ſpot, where grew a ſingle Thorn-
"tree, which he himſelf had afterwards ſeen; the whole account
"having been given him by faithful eyewitneſſes. After a bloudy
"and obſtinate diſpute, one King and five Counts were killed
"on the Pagan ſide, with many thouſands of common men,
"and the reſt were diſperſed all over the wide plain of Aſhdown,
"and purſued all that night, and the next day, as far as to their
"caſtle at Reading."

I have been very particular in relating this battle from Aſſer, not only to ſhew, that it was a compleat victory, but that the honour of the day is to be aſcribed to Alfred. Becauſe [a] William of Malmesbury and the chronicle, that goes under the name of [b] Abbot Bromton, give ſomewhat a different account of the matter: viz. "That Alfred engaged too haſtily with the "troops under his command, and was near upon retreating, when "the King coming up with his freſh forces, ſupported him ſo "well, that together they ſoon put the Pagans to flight." But even this account of the affair, ſuppoſing it to be true, will almoſt perſwade us, that the victory was owing to Alfred's bravery, in attacking them with half an army, that was probably not very numerous, and to the impreſſion that ſuch a charge muſt neceſſarily make upon the enemy. Though after all, it ſeems to me, that theſe Hiſtorians, the oldeſt of which lived between two and three hundred years after the thing happened, took their accounts only from Aſſer, and were either willing to make ſomething out of his words, which the author never meant; or were unwilling, that the pious King ſhould loſe his ſhare of the glory: for, as I obſerved before, it does not appear from Aſſer, that the King was at all concerned in the action, more than by his prayers. And Aſſer who gives you impartially Alfred's ill conduct, as well as his good, I think, would not have omitted it here, or have left the King ſo much out of the queſtion, had he not been aſſured of the truth of his relation.

[a] *Quæ fides regis multum adjuvit fratrem immaturitate juventæ præproperum, & jam progreſſum. Namque jam acies Anglorum declinabant, & urgentibus ex alto adverſariis fugam meditabantur, quod iniquo Chriſtianis loco pugnaretur: cum ille cruce Dei conſignatus ex inſperato advolat, hoſtem proturbans, civem in arma ciens, cujus virtute ſimul & Dei miraculo Dani territi pedibus, ſalutem committentes, fugere.* Will. Malmesb. de Geſt. Reg. Angl. Lib. 2. p. 42. [b] *Dani cum tanto impetu eum invaſerunt, quod fere cum ignominia in fugam eſt converſus.* Bromton, Chron. pag. 807.

But

But here we are much at a loſs: for tho' this event be mentioned, with all it's particular circumſtances; I think it has not yet been made clear, whereabouts the battle was fought. And though to ſome people this may ſeem a trifle, yet I hope to ſhew, before I have done, that a good deal depends upon it. Aſſer ſays it was at a place called Æſcesdune or Æscendune, which he interprets too *Mons Fraxini*, in Engliſh *Aſhesdown*, or *Aſhendown*. [a] Some make it *Aſhdown foreſt* in Suſſex: the learned Biſhop [b] Kennet is inclined to place it at *Aſhendon* in Buckinghamſhire in the foreſt of Bernwood, a town that gives name to the Hundred; Biſhop [c] Gibſon with more reaſon at a town called *Aſton* near Wallingford in Berkſhire, about fifteen miles from Reading. His Lordſhip was led into this opinion by a paſſage in the Saxon Annals, which is to this purpoſe. "A. D. 1006. They [the Danes] went to Walling-"ford, and there ſtaid ſometime, thence they paſſed along *Aſh-*"*down*, and went to Cwichelme's-low." If *Cwichelmes-low* here mean *Cuckhamſley-hill*, *Aſton* might very well be the place, it lying directly in the road between Wallingford and that Hill. But I am perſwaded that *Cwichelmes-low*, muſt be ſought for elſewhere, at ſome greater diſtance from Wallingford; becauſe I ſhall ſoon ſhew, that *Aſhdown*, through which they paſſed, lies in the line beyond *Cuckhamſley-hill*. I know of no higher authority than [d] Saxton's maps, for calling this *Cuckhamſley-hill*, having not been ſo fortunate, as to obtain the ſight of any old deeds and papers, relating to this part of the country. It is called by the neighbouring people *Cuchinſlow*, and *Scuchamere*; it is a large Barrow, on the brow of a high hill, viſible for ſeveral miles;

Aſhdown where.

a Æſceſdune. *Talbot writ heere Aſchdune foreſt in Southſax.* Leland Collect. Vol. 3. p. 194.
b *Parochial Antiquities of Burceſter*, &c. pag. 35. c See the Index of places names at the end of the Saxon Annals. d Printed in the year 1579.

where, till lately, ſtood a Poſt for a Beacon, for which reaſon it is more known to travellers by the name of *Beacon-hill*. Poſſibly it might be raiſed by King Cwichelm, who was in poſſeſſion of theſe parts, and died about the year 636; or it may be the *Low* or *Hill*, under which he lies buried. But yet I cannot believe it to be a thing of ſuch note, as that the march of an army ſhould be deſcribed, as directed to it. As for *Aſton*, there are no remains near it, that I can learn, which might perſwade us, that a battle was fought thereabouts: nor doth the name itſelf favour the opinion of it's being *Aſhdown*. For in the oldeſt records, ſuch as Domeſday book, and Pope Nicholas's Valor, it is wrote *Eſtone*, and means no more than the *Eaſt town*, with reſpect to ſome other, nigh which it is ſituated: and this undoubtedly is Blubery, a much older town. I therefore rather ſuppoſe *Cwichelms-low*, to mean ſome town in North Wiltſhire, or Glouceſterſhire; though I am not able at preſent to gueſs, where to fix it.

ASHDOWN was a place of conſiderable note in the Saxon times, as appears from it's being mentioned ſo often in the Annals. It ſeems to be a diſtrict or country rather than a Town, and it being called *Mons Fraxini* by Aſſer, as well as it's being the place of battel, ſeem to perſwade the ſame. I take it to mean that ridge of hills from Letcombe, and thereabouts, going on to Wiltſhire, and overlooking the Vale with the towns in it; containing large tracts of Down, and Sheep-paſture; where the great Weſtern road paſſes at this day, being called the *Rudge* or *Ridge-way*. I preſume it was likewiſe a well-known boundary: ſo that when it is ſaid, in the [a] Annals, *Wulfere the Son of Penda laid waſte all the country as far as Æſceſdune*, I ſup-

[a] *Annales Saxonici* A. D. 661.

poſe

Æycepdune xiv

Uffington Castle

Hardwell Camp

Wayland Smith

WAYLAND-SMITH.

W. Green delin.

Sumptibus RICHARDI MEAD

sive MONS FRAXINI.

G. Vertue Sculp.

D Archiatri.

poſe is meant, that he deſtroyed all the Vale, from Mercia, to the foot of this ridge of hills. Theſe Downs ſeem likewiſe to have been formerly adorned with Woods of Aſh, from whence they received the denomination of Aſhdown. Near Letcombe is a ſhrubby place ſtill called *The Aſhes*, and *Letcombe Aſhes*, where, as I have been informed by a curious and learned [a] gentleman of this neighbourhood, grew, within the memory of ſeveral perſons lately dead, abundance of tall, and very fair Aſhes; Theſe probably were the laſt of this ſort deſtroyed hereabouts; and ſo far Eaſtward, I am inclined to think, that Aſhdown extended, if not further, to a place called *Aſhen-Pen*, ſtill more Eaſtward. On the Weſtern ſide it's bounds will diſcover themſelves with more certainty. I have not leiſure, nor will it be of any great uſe to the publick, to ſettle the limits of it with exactneſs, which yet I am perſwaded may be done: I ſhall however obſerve further, that it ſeems to have been the demeſne lands of the Weſt-Saxons Kings, as I find by their granting it away to their favourites. In a [b] charter of Ethelwolf Alfred's father, bearing date A. D. 840. he gives to Dundan, *Decem Caſſatos in loco qui dicitur Ayſſhedoune*. At length a town came to be built on the Weſtern limits of it, which is now called *Aſhbury*, but was formerly called *Ayſſhedoune*; as you may ſee in the [c] Charter of King Edred dated A. D. 947. *Viginti manſas ei* [Edrigo] *libenter largiendo, concedens perdonabo; illic ubi vulgus priſca relatione vocitat* at Ayſſhedoune. And to the ſame charter is annexed a memorandum *Memoratum Manerium, quod nunc vocatur* AYSSHEBURY. Aſhbury therefore, according to this Charter, is only a more modern name, ſignifying the ſame thing, viz. *Aſh-Hill*, or *Down*, from the Saxon Beopʒ. *Collis*. But even

[a] John Blandy Eſquire of Purley. [b] See the *Leiger book of Glaſtonbury Abbey*: a MS. in the Bodleian Library. Fol. 245. a. [c] *Monaſticon Anglicanum*. Vol. 2. p. 842.

the

the old name is ſtill preſerved hereabouts, the Downs being called by the Shepheards, *Aſhdown*, and about a mile Southward from *Aſhbury* is [a] *Aſhdown-Park*, correptly called *Aſhen-Park*, the Seat of the Lord Craven.

Here then I was perſwaded to look for the field of battle; and was agreeably ſurprized to find my expectation anſwered in every reſpect. Here my imagination painted the two armies extended *over the wide plain*, and *engaged about the ſingle Thorn-tree*, there being here and there to be ſeen one of this kind. Upon the higheſt hill of theſe parts North Eaſtward is a large Roman entrenchment, called *Uffington-Caſtle*, from overlooking the town of Uffington, in the Vale; where I ſuppoſe the Danes lay encamped: for as their marches were generally haſty, and more like that of plunderers, than of a regular army, they had not time to throw up fortifications, nor indeed was there occaſion, where they found enough of them ready made to their hands. This place I chooſe for the Danes, becauſe Aſſer ſays, they had got the upper ground. About half a mile lower weſtward on the brow of the hill, nearer to Aſhbury, overlooking a farm-houſe called *Hardwell*, is a Camp, fortified ſeemingly after the Saxon manner, with two ditches, but not near ſo ſtrong as the former, which has only one: this is called *Hardwell Camp*, and here I ſuppoſe King Ethelred lay, the night before the engagement. About a mile or more from hence, behind the Wood of Aſhdown-park, is a ſlight roundiſh entrenchment, which ſeems to be thrown up in haſte, and which, as I have been informed, is called both *Aſhbury camp*, and *King Alfred's Caſtle*. Mr Aubrey's account of this, (for he did not know

[a] By Inquiſition dated 10 April, 18 Elizabeth, 1576, at Lamborne, it is found, called *Aſhdowne Park, alias Aſßen Park*. Chart. penes Hon. D. Craven.

of

of *Hardwell Camp*) is, [a] "From hence we come to White-horſe "Hill, the head of the River Ock; above which by Aſhbury-"Park is a camp of a figure, as near round as ſquare, the dia-"meter above an hundred paces, and the works ſingle, which "ſeems to prove it Daniſh. But the works are now almoſt quite "ſpoiled and defaced, by digging for the Sarſden-ſtones as they "call them, to build my Lord Craven's houſe in the Park." Beſides theſe camps, we may add the Barrows, ſcatter'd over the Downs in great plenty, ſufficient to convince any man, that this part of the country muſt have been formerly the ſcene of war and bloudſhed.

The White-Horſe.

Such a ſignal victory, as the Saxons obtained at this place, deſerved not to paſs without ſome token, and memorial of it. And ſuch I take to be, the WHITE-HORSE deſcribed on the Hill, almoſt under Uffington Caſtle. A thing of ſuch note amongſt our anceſtors, that it has given it's name to one of the largeſt and fruitfuleſt Vales in England.

That the moſt ancient people, before the invention of books, and before the uſe of ſculpture upon ſtones, and other ſmaller fragments were wont to repreſent things great and noble, upon entire rocks and mountains ſeems ſo natural, that it is eaſily imagined, and aſſented to by all. And that the cuſtom was not laid aſide for many ages after, is plain from Hiſtory. Semiramis to perpetuate her memory, is reported to have cut a whole rock into the form of herſelf. Hannibal, long after the invention of books, engraved characters upon the Alpine rocks, as a teſtimony of his paſſage over them; which were remaining about two centuries ago, if we may believe

[a] *Additions to the Britannia, in Berkſhire*, pag. 150. New Edit.

[a] Paulus

[a] Paulus Jovius. But, what is moſt to our purpoſe, it appears to have been particularly the cuſtom of the Northern nations, from that remarkable inſcription, mentioned by [b] Saxo, and ſeveral ages after him delineated, and publiſhed by [c] Olaus Wormius. This was inſcribed by Harold Hyldetand to the memory of his father; it was cut on the ſide of a rock in Runic characters, each letter of the inſcription being a quarter of an Ell long, and the length of the whole thirty four Ells.

After this manner our Horſe is formed, on the ſide of an high and ſteep hill, facing the North weſt. His dimenſions are extended over an acre of ground, or thereabouts: his Head, Neck, Body, and Tail, conſiſt of one white line; as does alſo each of his Four Legs. This is done by cutting a trench into the chalk, of about two or three feet deep, and about ten feet broad. The Chalk of the trench being of a brighter colour, than the turf which ſurrounds it, the rays of the afternoon's Sun darting upon it make the whole figure viſible for ten or a dozen, nay fifteen miles, if I am rightly informed.

The Horſe at firſt view is enough to raiſe the admiration of

a Hannibal literas trajectionis ſuæ teſtes Alpinis rupibus inſcripſit, quæ apud Barrum hodie extant. P. Jovius Hiſt. Lib. XV. p. 163. *b Apud Blekingiam apta meantibus Rupes mirandis literarum notis interſtincta conſpicitur ſiquidem à meridiano mari in deſerta Verundiæ, petroſa porrigitur ſemita, quam binæ lineæ exiguo diſcretæ ſpatio, protractis in longum ductibus amplectuntur. Inter quas medium loco planum factis ad legendum figuris undique ſecus exaratum oſtenditur. Quod licet adeo ſitu inæquale exiſtat, ut modo montium alta proſcindat, modo vallium ima prætereat, eodem tamen tenore literarum veſtigia ſervare dignoſcitur: quarum ſignificationem Rex Woldemarus ſacri Canuti fauſta proles admirationis cauſa cognoſcere cupiens, miſit qui Rupem permeantes, patentium illic Characterum ſeriem curioſiori indagatione colligerent, ac poſtmodum virgulis quibuſdam ſub iiſdem formarum apicibus adnotarent. Qui ideo nihil ex iis interpretamenti comprehendere potuerunt; quod ipſa cælaturæ concavitas partim cæno interlita, partim commeantium adeſa veſtigiis figuratæ protractionis ſpeciem obtrito calle confuderat.* Saxon. Gram. Præf. ad Hiſt. Dan. That this monument was engraved in the rock by order of Harold Hyldetand appears from a paſſage in the ſame Saxo's Hiſtory. *Is enim* [Haraldus Hyldetand] *in monumentum patris, ejus res geſtas apud Blekingiam Rupi, per artifices mandare curæ habuit.* Hiſt. Lib. VII. *c* Olaus Wormius. Monum. Danica. Lib. III.

every

W. Greene delin.

Vetustatis Saxonicæ decus singulare

HONORATISS. D.ns GULIELMUS

CONSPECTUS.

Hardwell-Camp

Compton

G. Vertue Sculp.

Ære immortali donavit
BARO. DE CRAVEN.

every curious ſpectator, being deſigned in ſo maſterlike a manner, that it may defy the painter's skill, to give a more exact deſcription of that animal: which were it not ſo apparent, would hardly gain belief with an antiquary, who conſiders to how low an ebb the art of drawing was ſunk at that time; as appears from the works of their beſt maſters, the Saxon coins, and the jewel of King Alfred, deſcribed by Dr Hickes and others, and now preſerved in the Muſeum at Oxford. If we conſider it further, we muſt likewiſe allow, that no ſmall skill in Opticks was requiſite, both for the choice of the ground, and for diſpoſing rude lines, as they appear to a perſon upon the ſpot, in ſuch a manner, as to form ſo beautiful a repreſentation. And again, if durability was intended, the ingenuity of the artiſt will appear ſtill greater. For from it's barren ſoil, and ſteep ſituation, it has nothing to fear from the inroads of the plough, the grazing of larger cattle, or the ſtagnation of waters; all which contribute more or leſs to efface things of this ſort. When I ſaw it, the Head had ſuffered a little, and wanted reparation: and the extremities of his hinder legs from their unavoidable ſituation, have by the fall of rains been filled up in ſome meaſure with the waſhings from the upper parts; ſo that in the neareſt view of him, the Tail, which does not ſuffer the ſame inconvenience, and has continued entire from the beginning, ſeems longer than his legs. The ſupplies which nature is continually affording, occaſion the turf on the upper verge of his body, for want of continuity, to crumble, and fall off into the white trench, which in many years time produces ſmall ſpecks of turf, and not a little obſcures the brightneſs of the Horſe. Though there is no danger from hence of the whole figure being obliterated; yet the neighbouring inhabitants have a cuſtom of *Scouring the Horſe*, as they call it; at which time a ſolemn feſti-

val is celebrated, and manlike games with prizes exhibited, which no doubt had their original in the Saxon times, in memory of the victory. This falling of the turf into the trench is the reaſon likewiſe, why the country people erroneouſly imagine, that the Horſe, ſince his firſt fabrication, has ſhifted his quarters, and is got higher upon the Hill, than formerly. His preſent owner is the Right Honble William Lord Craven, who was pleaſed to encourage theſe enquiries, by a free ſearch into the writings relating to this part of his eſtate, and to oblige the publick, with an Engraving of this venerable remain, as it appears at about four or five miles diſtance, in the road between Highworth and Faringdon; which, the reader muſt take notice, is the beſt view of it.

If ever the genius of K. Alfred exerted itſelf, (and it never failed him in his greateſt exigencies) it did remarkably ſo, upon the account of this trophy. The ſituation of his affairs would not permit him to ſpend much time, nor his cirumſtances much coſt, in effecting one. His troops, though victorious, were harraſſed, and diminiſhed by continual duty; nor did the country afford, to any man's thinking, materials proper for a work of this kind. Though he had not therefore the opportunity of raiſing, like other conquerours, a ſtupendous monument of Braſs, or Marble, yet he has ſhewn an admirable contrivance, in erecting One, magnificent enough, tho' ſimple in it's deſign, executed too with little labour and no expence, that may hereafter vye with the Pyramids for duration, and perhaps exiſt, when thoſe ſhall be no more.

A Horſe the Saxon Standard.

No one can be ignorant, that the Horſe was the Standard which the Saxons uſed, both before and after their coming hither. This is ſo well known and allowed, that the very names of the two firſt Saxon

Saxon Leaders, are ſuppoſed by [a] Bp Nicolſon, not to be proper, but typical or emblematical only: and that as the Emperor of Germany is ſometimes ſtiled *The Eagle*, and the King of France *The Lilly*, from the Arms they bear; ſo theſe were ſtiled *Horſes*, from their Banner. For HENGST in Saxon ſignifies, no more than a *Stonehorſe*, and HORSA need not be explained to an Engliſh reader.

Alfred therefore in [b] *Setting up his Banner for a Token*, did nothing, but what was exactly agreeable to ancient practice. And might probably in ſo doing, have a further regard to Antiquity; a *White-Horſe* itſelf being no improper emblem of victory and [c] triumph; according to the [d] Poet.

Ergo erit illa dies, qua tu, pulcherrime rerum,
Quatuor in NIVEIS Aureus ibis EQUIS.

I muſt not omit the poſture in which the Horſe is delineated, which is not Rampant or Prancing, as repreſented in [e] Speed, [f] Sammes, and the Arms of Savoy, whoſe Princes are deſcended from thoſe of Saxony; but Current or [g] Galloping, as deſcribed in the Arms of the houſe of Brunſwick at this day. If any diſputes ſhould ariſe among Heralds about theſe different bearings of the Horſe; as likewiſe, whether he ought to be Current from the Dexter part, or Siniſter, which I believe is a point not entirely ſettled: I think, till ſome other more ancient record ſhall be produced, they may be fairly determined

a Engliſh Atlas. Vol. 2. Tom. 1. p. 52. *b* Pſalm 74. v. 5. *c Decrevit Senatus, ut in Triumpho jam ante conceſſo, EQUIS ALBIS uteretur.* Dio. de Julio. Hiſt. Rom. Lib. 43. *d* Ovid. de Art. Am. Lib. 1. *e History of Great Britain.* Fol. Lond. 1611. Pag. 293. *f Britannia Antiqua Illuſtrata.* Fol. Lond. 1676. Pag. 471. *g* It muſt be confeſſed that in ſome views of the Horſe, his fore part appears more elevated than in others (as I obſerved it from the *Saracen's-Head* Inn in Highworth) but even in this view, he appears galloping, which is the moſt natural attitude, and was undoubtedly intended by the artiſt.

from this authentick one, of Eight hundred and ſixty ſeven years ſtanding.

The Reaſon of bearing it.

I ſhall take this opportunity of encountring an old, but ill grounded, opinion, delivered down by Krantzius, if not invented by him, and maintained without contradiction by later writers. [a] A. D. 785. *Witichind*, ſays he, *upon his converſion from the darkneſs of Paganiſm, was the firſt who took* THE WHITE COLT *for his device, in alluſion to the brightneſs of Chriſtianity; having till that time uſed a Black One. And theſe are the moſt ancient Arms of Saxony.* This account, I muſt beg leave to ſay, ſavours too much of Legend and Allegory, to deſerve credit. Beſides, the veneration for *White Horſes* amongſt the Germans, ſeems to have had a much higher original; even amongſt the oldeſt Pagan idolaters: [b] Tacitus telling us, *That it was the cuſtom of this people, to take carefully the preſages of certain* WHITE HORSES, *kept for that purpoſe in their ſacred Groves free from any ſort of labour, except when harneſſed to the ſacred Chariot: at which time it was uſual for the Prieſt, and King, or chief man of the City, to accompany it, and to obſerve their neighings: And this with them is eſteem'd the moſt credible kind of augury: for they imagine that theſe Horſes know themſelves to be the ſervants of the Gods.* This, it is likely, was an ancient ſuperſtition derived from the Eaſtern Aſiaticks; and perhaps may afford one more argument for the Germans being a

a *Armorum inſignia, quæ militaribus, ut fit, ſignis præferebat,* PULLUM EQUINUM *habebat* ATRUM: *ſed placuit regi* [Wedekindo] *poſtquam de tenebris gentilium errorum pervenit in lucem veritatis, ut* CANDIDVM *acciperet: ea vero vetuſtiſſima Saxoniæ Arma.* Alb. Krantzius Saxonia Lib. II. c. 24. b *Proprium gentis* EQUORUM *quoque præſagia ac monitus experiri; publice aluntur iiſdem nemoribus ac lucis,* CANDIDI *ac nullo mortali opere contacti, quos preſſos ſacro Curru, Sacerdos, ac Rex, vel Princeps civitatis comitantur, hinnitus atque fremitus obſervant, nec ulli auſpicio major fides, non ſolum apud plebem, ſed apud proceres, apud ſacerdotes: Se enim miniſtros deorum illos conſcios putant.* De Moribus German.

Colony

Colony of the Perſians; for we read that Cyrus had in his army, when he marched towards Babylon, [a] *Certain WHITE HORSES, which the Perſians accounted ſacred.* This cuſtom continued with the Germans long after the times of Tacitus, and of Witichind too. For the inhabitants of the Iſle of Rugen, who ſpeak the dialect of lower Saxony, and who were lateſt converted to Chriſtianity, had a [b] White Horſe attending upon their idol [c] *Zantwit* or *Swant*, which was under the management of the Prieſt, and from whence they likewiſe took preſages, agreeably to the above mentioned account of Tacitus. The reaſon for depicting the White Horſe in their banners was idolatrous likewiſe, and owing at firſt to the great confidence which they put in theſe Preſages, and ſo was continued perhaps with other Pagan cuſtoms, without enquiring into the reaſon of it, after the times of Chriſtianity. In like manner the Pagan Danes had their preſaging *Raven* born in their banner, which was taken from them at the [d] battle of Kenwith in Devonſhire A. D. 878. The Chriſtians on the other hand, who put their whole truſt in the Croſs, and Image of their Saviour, bore Thoſe likewiſe as their Banners: witneſs [e] Auguſtine's proceſſion, when he went to meet King Ethelbert.

a Herodotus. Lib. I. *b* *EQUUM præterea CANDORE NIVEUM alunt, ſolius ſacerdotis miniſterio attrectandum, quippe eo Zantewitum, (hoc enim ſimulacro nomen, ut diximus, indidere) ſolere hoſtes ſuos inſequi putant. Perfidiam fovet, quod eum mane ſudantem conſpiciunt, quaſi magnum noctu confecerit iter. Hunc illis Equum auſpicari facium bellum quod imminet, nam ſi dextero pede locum ſignatum tetigerit, fauſtum, ſi ſiniſtro infauſtum, ominantur.* Albert. Krantzius. Wandaliæ Lib. V. c. 12. p. 110. *c* *Zantwit* is no other than St *Vitus*, the Monk, who firſt preached the Goſpel to thoſe barbarous people, and was afterwards by them idolized under a monſtrous form. The image was broken to pieces by Waldemar King of Denmark, upon taking the Caſtle *Arcon* A. D. 1168. See Saxo Grammaticus Hiſt. Danic. Lib. XIV. See likewiſe Biſhop Nicolſon Engl. Atlas in Rugen. Vol. 2. p. 82. *d* See Aſſer p. 33. *e* *Crucem pro Vexillo ferentes & imaginem Domini Salvatoris in Tabula depictam.* Beda Eccl. Hiſt. Lib. I. c. 25.

All

The White-Horſe ſcarce taken notice of by Others.

All true lovers of Antiquity, and that have a veneration for the memory of that excellent Prince, we have been ſpeaking of, cannot but regret with me the hard fate, that this noble Monument has met with. Paſt over in ſilence by ancient hiſtorians, and hardly ſo much as reckoned by travellers amongſt the curioſities of the country! Add to this, that though there is not a man who is not clear in the point of it's vaſt antiquity, yet all traces of it's deſign are entirely worn out among the neighbouring inhabitants!

Leland's journey does not ſeem to have carried him this way, nor does Camden here go out of the other's track; though he mention's upon another occaſion, and by the by, *The Whitehorſe*; but in ſuch a manner, that I could wiſh for his own ſake, he had paſſed it over in ſilence with the reſt. For his account is altogether unbecoming ſo faithful, and accurate an author: inſinuating to his readers, that it has no exiſtence, but in the imaginations of the country people. *The Thames*, ſays he, *falls into a valley, which they call* The Vale of Whitehorſe, *from I know not what ſhape of a Horſe fancied on the ſide of a Whitiſh Hill.* Much nearer to the truth is Mr Aubrey, however wide of the mark, who in the additions to the Britannia ſays: *I leave others to determine, whether* THE WHITE HORSE *on the Hill, was made by Hengiſt, ſince the Horſe was the Arms or figure in Hengiſt's Standard.* The author of a [a] *Tour through England*, is a little more particular, though he leaves us as much in the dark about the antiquity and deſign of it. *Between this Town of Marlborow, and Abingdon, is the Vale of White-Horſe. The inhabitants tell a great many fabulous ſtories of the original of it's name; but there is nothing*

[a] Three Volumes. 8vo. Lond. 1738. Vol. 2. p. 42.

of

of foundation in them, that I could find. The whole of the ſtory is this: Looking South from the Vale, we ſee a trench cut on the ſide of a high green hill, in the ſhape of a Horſe, and not ill ſhaped neither, the trench is about a yard deep, and filled almoſt up with chalk, ſo that at a diſtance you ſee the exact ſhape of a White Horſe, but ſo large, as to take up near an acre of ground, ſome ſay almoſt two acres. From this figure the Hill is called in our maps, White-Horſe Hill, and the low, or flat, country under it, The Vale of White Horſe.

The Feſtival of Scouring the Horſe.

Thus far theſe writers; who are all that I can at preſent recollect, that have mentioned any thing material concerning the Horſe: which they ſeem indeed to have done with the curioſity, but at the ſame time with the haſte of travellers: caſting a tranſient eye upon it, without giving themſelves leiſure to enquire into its meaning. Had Mr Camden thought it worth his while to ſearch narrowly into it's antiquity, and conſidered it's ſituation, with regard to the neighbouring country, I am perſwaded that he would have ſaved me the labour. Had he in particular attended to, what every inhabitant hereabout was ready to inform him of, The ceremony of *Scouring the Horſe*, which from time immemorial has been ſolemnized by a numerous concourſe of people from all the villages round about, he muſt have been convinced, that it was formed with a view to ſome publick action. That the meaning of this cuſtom has been ſo long forgot, is not at all to be wondered at, conſidering the convulſions, and changes, which the ſtate of our nation has formerly undergone, the ignorance that enſued, and the perſons to whoſe care it has been chiefly left to keep it up. The ſame thing may be obſerved of other cuſtoms with great ſtrictneſs maintained by the vulgar, though they are unable to give any tolerable account of their origin; particularly that of *Wakes*, or Feaſts of

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The Dedication of Churches; whoſe true deſign is for the moſt part a ſecret to the perſons concerned, but is diſcovered by the diligence of antiquaries. And that our Feſtival is of a more general nature than that of Wakes, which are confined to ſingle pariſhes reſpectively, ſeems plain; becauſe, as I am informed, though the Horſe ſtands in the pariſh of Uffington, yet other towns claim, by ancient cuſtom, a ſhare of the duty upon this occaſion. Since therefore this noble antiquity is now explained, and conſequently the reaſon of the Feſtival, it were to be wiſhed, that, in order to prevent for the future it's falling into oblivion, ſome care was taken of the regulation of the Games, and that they were reſtored to their ancient ſplendour, of which, without queſtion, they are fallen much ſhort.

I know that theſe rites are cavilled at, and maligned, by the more ſupercilious part of mankind: but the diſlike to them ſeems to be founded meerly upon the abuſe of them to riot, and debauchery, which I intend by no means to juſtify, or excuſe. The practice of the beſt and wiſeſt States, whoſe maxims we approve, and profeſs to follow, is ſufficient authority for their uſe. The Liberty we ſo juſtly boaſt, and which ought to be a common bleſſing to all, pleads loudly for them. The common people, from their daily labour, ſtand at leaſt in as much need of proper intervals of recreation, as their ſuperiours, who are exempt from it: and therefore in all free States have been indulged in Sports moſt ſuited to their genius, and capacity. And if manlike Games contribute any thing towards the ſupport of the natural bravery of Theſe, who are to be our bulwark and defence, in times of danger, they cannot be more ſeaſonably revived, than at this juncture; when through the general luxury, and diſſoluteneſs of the age, there was never more likelyhood of it's being extinguiſhed. Beſides all this,

from

from hence a ſuperiour influence diffuſeth itſelf through the better ſort, who are ſuppoſed to enter further into the intention of theſe ſolemnities; for which reaſon it is, that to perpetuate to poſterity the remembrance of great men, and of great actions, has been always recommended, as a proper incentive to virtue. Cuſtoms of very trifling import, ſome ridiculous in themſelves, others owing to cauſes equally ridiculous, are oftentimes kept up by Engliſhmen with much zeal, and tenacity: and ſhall the greateſt Prince, that this Iſle was ever bleſt with, and the greateſt action of that Prince's life, be in danger of being forgot, through the neglect of a ſolemnity, the only one perhaps that was ever inſtituted, at leaſt, that is now preſerved, to his honour?

The Magiſtrates of Greece or Rome would have thought it a point of the utmoſt concern, to preſerve to the very lateſt times the memorial of ſo remarkable an event; and to revive it, if through any accidents of State, it ſhould have grown into diſuſe. But if it may be thought, not to be of ſo great moment, as to deſerve the care of our Legiſlature; yet, if I may preſume to ſay it, it will become the generous mind of the Noble Lord, who by inheriting the manour of Aſhdown, as well as by his amiable qualities, may be ſaid to ſtand in the place of King Alfred, to ſet apart a ſufficient fund, for the perpetual diſcharge of this tribute to his memory.

If the time of ſolemnizing this Feſtival, which has been often left to the diſcretion of the inhabitants, was fixed to ſome certain period, ſuppoſe a revolution of Four Years, as perhaps was at firſt intended: I muſt appeal to all perſons, who have a regard for ancient cuſtoms to which a laudable meaning is annexed, whether ſuch a ſolemnity would not deſerve the countenance and preſence of the Nobility and Gentry; which would

have a good influence upon the aſſembly, add decency to the meeting, and reſtrain the exceſſes of the populace.

Another uſe would be made of it by the common people, in their reckoning of time; which, I ſuppoſe, is now by their different Seed-times and Fallow, but then would more properly be done by the Second, Third, or Fourth, Year of the Scouring of the Horſe. Nor ſhould I deſpair of it's having ſtill a more general effect, by creating a new Æra in our Engliſh Hiſtory, viz. THE RESTORATION OF THE SAXON OLYMPICKS.

The King Slain at Aſhdown.

The perſon of greateſt note ſlain at the battle of Aſhdown was one of the Pagan Kings, by which is meant, I ſuppoſe, one of the bloud royal, and probably of the houſe of Denmark; it being no unuſual thing with ſuch, in that fighting age, to attend upon, and give countenance to, theſe piratical expeditions. And here we are again at a loſs for this King's true name. The Daniſh Hiſtory mention's one of this ſort of Kings ſlain in England about this time, who is called [a] *Ivarus*; a name widely differing from that given him by our own Hiſtorians; ſcarce any two of which agree in it, tho' all relating the ſame fact. Ranulf Higden calls him *Oſric*, Simeon of Durham *Oſeg*, Ethelwerd *Berſe*, Hen. Huntingdon *Baſreg*, Ingulfus *Baſeg*, Roger Hoveden *Baiſeg*, The Saxon Annals Bachyeg, but Aſſer Bægrceg, which in modern pronunciation may be *Beskey*, or *Baskey*, in Latin BASCAIUS, as in Florence of Worceſter, and Matthew of Weſtminſter. I ſhall leave the name to ſhift for itſelf; and proceed to the place of his burial, which, I think, I have diſcovered upon the field of battle, diſtinguiſhed by a parcel of ſtones ſet on edge, and en-

[a] See Pontanus, Hiſt. Rer. Dan. Fol. Amſt. 1631. pag. 104.

cloſing

cloſing a piece of ground, raiſed a few feet above the common level, which every one knows was the cuſtom of the Danes, as well as of ſome other Northern nations. [a] And Wormius obſerves, that if any Daniſh chief was ſlain in a foreign country, they took care to bury him as pompouſly, as if he had died in his own. Mr Aubrey's account of it is this. "About a mile [or "leſs] from the Hill [White-Horſe Hill] there are a great ma- "ny large ſtones, which though very confuſed, muſt yet be laid "there on purpoſe. Some of them are placed edgwiſe, but the "reſt are ſo diſorderly, that one would imagine, they were tum- "bled out of a cart". The diſorder which Mr Aubrey ſpeaks of, is occaſioned, by the people having thrown down ſome of the ſtones (for they all ſeem originally to have been ſet on edge) and broken them to pieces to mend their highways. Thoſe that are left, encloſe a piece of ground of an irregular figure at preſent, but which formerly might have been an oblong [b] ſquare, extending duly North and South.

Wayland-Smith.

On the eaſtſide of the Southern extremity, ſtand Three Squariſh flat ſtones of about four or five feet over each way, ſet on edge, and ſupporting a Fourth of much larger dimenſions, lying flat upon them. Theſe altogether form a Cavern or ſheltring place, reſembling pretty exactly thoſe deſcribed by Wormius, Bartholine, and others, except in the dimenſions of the ſtones; for whereas this may ſhelter only ten or a dozen ſheep from a ſtorm, Wormius mentions one in Denmark, that would ſhelter a hundred.

I know of no other monument of this ſort in England: but

a Extra patriam ſi in prælio occubuiſſet Dux, non minus magnifice, quam domi eum tumulatum ſupra innuimus. Ol. Worm. Mon. Dan. p. 36. *b Aream inſuper Quadratam adjicientes, quæ totam molem grandioribus ſaxis includeret.* Ol. Wormius. Mon. Danic. p. 34.

in [a] Wales, and the Iſle of Angleſey there are ſeveral, not unlike it, called by the natives *Cromlechs*. The Iſle of Angleſey having been the chief ſeat of the Druids, induced it's learned [b] antiquary to aſcribe them to the ancient Britains, an aſſertion that I will not take upon me to contradict; but ſhall only at this time obſerve, that I find ſufficient authorities to convince me, that Ours muſt be Daniſh. The northern [c] antiquaries agree to call them ALTARS; and [d] Bartholine ſaith *They uſually bore the name of the perſon buried under them.* He tells us likewiſe, that *They were raiſed by the Sons, Grandſons, or other friends of the deceaſed.* And that theſe burial monuments were applied to the purpoſe of ſacrificing, is not improbable; ſince it was the [e] cuſtom of the Pagan Danes to deify their great men. In Denmark Three of theſe Altars are commonly found together, deſigned, as is ſuppoſed, for the ſervice of their Three chief Deities, Thor, Woden, and Frea, but Wormius lays it down as a rule, that

a See Mr Llhuyd's Additions to the Britannia in Pembrokeſhire, and Mr Rowland's Mona Antiqua Reſtaurata. 4to. Dublin. 1723. p. 92, 93, 213. *b* Rowland's Mona Antiqua Reſt. Pag. 69. & 213. *c Commemoratione dignum videtur, notatum quoque ab aliis, quod in regione hac ingentis molis ſaxa complura, quæ nulla vectatione, nulla vi hominum illac deportari potuiſſe ob magnitudinem credas, congeſta inveniantur, quorum ea diſpoſitio eſt, ut ARAS referre videantur. Nam jacentibus nonnullis, alia iis impoſita ſunt plana, relictumque foramen anguſtum per quod homo reptare poſſit.* Ubbo Emmius Hiſt. Friſ. Lib. I. p. 21. *ARARUM ſtructura apud nos varia eſt. Maxima ex parte congeſto ex terra conſtant tumulo, in cujus ſummitate* Tria ingentia Saxa, Quartum illudque majus, latius, ac planius, ſuſtinent, fulciunt ac ſuſtentant, ut inſtar menſæ tribus fulcris innixæ emineat. Sub hac mole Cavitas viſitur, *in quibuſdam vaſta ſatis, in aliis terra ac lapidibus repleta, quæ ſanguini victimarum recipiendo deputata creditur.* Ol. Worm. Mon. Dan. pag. 7. *d Cæterum Saxa illa tumulos mortuorum incantia, cum omnis literaturæ eſſent expertia, plerumque in ARÆ modum coagmentata fuiſſe,* tribus oblongioribus quartum grandius & latius fulcientibus, *Wormius ſuſpicatur Lib. 1. c. 7. Mon. Dan. Quomodocunque poſita nomen ab defuncto, in cujus honorem erigebantur, ſortita, ex Finnoboga Ramma Saga diſcimus. Poſt acceſſum Finni communiter eum* [Finbogum] *ſub lapide ſepelierunt, qui deinde lapis Finbogi nominatus eſt. Erigebantur hi lapides, ab filiis, nepotibus, vel amicis, fidem faciente vetuſtiſſima in Edda Sæmundi Oda Havamal.* Tho. Bartholinus. Cauſæ contemptæ à Danis Mortis. p. 121. *e Colunt & Deos ex hominibus factos, quos pro ingentibus factis immortalitate donant ſicut in vita S. Anſgarii legitur Hericus rex feciſſe.* Adam. Bremenſis, apud Bartholinum.

where

where we meet with *a Single one*, as in the preſent caſe, we are to look upon it, [a] *as a Sepulchral Altar, where ſacrifices were to be annually performed in honour of the defunct.* The Welch word *Cromlech* too, according to their [b] Antiquaries, is only the Hebrew חרם לוח, Cherem-luach, i. e. *The devoted*, or *Altar Stone.* I muſt not here forget to mention, that there ſeem to have been two approaches to our Altar, through Rows of large ſtones ſet on edge, One from the South, The Other from the Weſt, the latter leading directly into the Cavern.

Whether this remarkable piece of Antiquity ever bore the name of the perſon here buried, is not now to be learned; the true meaning of it being long ſince loſt in ignorance and fable. All the account, which the country people are able to give of it, is "At this place lived formerly an inviſible Smith; and "if a traveller's Horſe had loſt a Shoe upon the road, he had "no more to do, than to bring the Horſe to this place, with "a piece of money, and leaving both there for ſome little time, "he might come again and find the money gone, but the Horſe "new ſhod." The ſtones ſtanding upon the *Rudge-way* as it is called; (which was the [c] ſituation, that they choſe for burial monuments) I ſuppoſe, gave occaſion to the whole being called WAYLAND-SMITH: which is the name it was always known by to the country people.

a Raro unicam ſolam invenies, ſæpius Tres, brevi intervallo à ſe invicem diſtantes, in honorem Trium primariorum Idolorum erectas. Unica ubi viſitur, maxima ex parte Sepulchro impoſita eſſe ſolet. Eo fine ut ibidem in memoriam defuncti quotannis ſacra peragantur. Mon. Dan. p.8. *b* Mona Ant. Reſt. Pag. 47, 214. *c Dani cum Pyramides ac Obeliſcos extruere non potuerint, olim in memoriam Regum ac Heroum ſuorum ex terra coacervata ingentes moles montium inſtar eminentes ſtatuiſſe, credibile omnino ac probabile eſt. Atque illis adeo in locis, ut plurimum, quo ſæpe homines commearent, aut iter haberent, ut in Viis Publicis, quo poſteritati memoriam clariſſimorum virorum conſecrarent.* Jo. Cypræus Annal. Eccl. Sleſvic. Lib. I. c. 2.

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An Engliſh antiquary might find buſineſs enough, who ſhould attempt to unriddle all the fabulous traditions of the vulgar, which aſcribe theſe works of unknown antiquity to Demons, and inviſible powers: but perhaps this particular of the Horſe, may be owing to the cuſtom of the Danes, and other northern nations, of ſacrificing ſome favourite animal to the *manes* of the deceaſed. For whether they buried or burnt the body, it was uſual to add to it, His Arms, together with ſome animal, and more eſpecially an [a] Horſe. I have been informed, that in one of the Barrows lately dug up on theſe Downs, but nearer to Wantage, beſides a human Sceleton, were found the horns of a Stag.

Leaving therefore the ſtory of the inviſible Smith to be diſcuſſed by thoſe, who have more leiſure: I only remark, that theſe ſtones are, according to the beſt Daniſh antiquaries, a Burial Altar; that their being raiſed in the midſt of a plain field, near the great road, ſeems to indicate ſome perſon there ſlain, and buried; and that this perſon was probably a Chief or King; there being no monument of this ſort near that place, perhaps not in England beſide. If it be allowed me likewiſe, that King Ethelred lay encamped at Hardwell, this will afford another ar-

[a] *Struem rogi, nec veſtibus, nec odoribus cumulant: SUA cuique ARMA, quorundam igni & EQUUS adjicitur, ſepulchrum ceſpes erigit.* Tacit. de Mor. Germ. *Gerrhi Scythica gens, defuncto Rege, in tumulo ubi cadaver odoribus delibutum erat, præcipuam Concubinarum, Coquum, Agaſonem, ac Miniſtrum una tumulare, EQUOSQUE, & quinquaginta ex miniſtris ad rogum præfocare aſſuerant.* Alexander ab Alexand. Lib. III. c. 7. *Aſmundus ob amicitiæ jusjurandum, vivum ſe cum Aſviti cadavere (quod cum CANE & EQUO, terreno mandabatur antro) contumulari ſuſtinuit.* Saxo Gram. Hiſt. Dan. Lib. V. *Frotho convocatis quas vicerat gentibus, lege cavit, ut quiſquis paterfamilias eo concideret bello, cum EQUO omnibuſque ARMATURÆ ſuæ inſignibus tumulo mandaretur.* Idem Lib. V. *Haraldi corpus exquiri præcepit* [Ringo] *ne regium funus debitis fraudaretur inferiis —— Haraldi* manibus parentandum *ratus, EQUUM quem inſidebat, regio applicatum currui aureis ſubſelliis decenter inſtratum ejus titulis dedicavit: ubi Haraldus eo vectore ſuos fati conſortes ad tartara antecederet. —— Ibique cum EQUO & ARMIS regio more funerari præcepit.* Idem Lib. VIII.

gument,

gument, for it's being raiſed for the King ſlain, whoſe troops were oppoſed to King Ethelred's diviſion, as thoſe of the Counts were to Alfred's: for the ſtones are about half a mile from Hardwell camp.

The Seven Barrows.

If this was a burying place for the King only, and not common to the nobles, who were ſlain with him: I would chooſe to fix the interment of the Counts, at a remarkable place, called *The Seven Barrows*; about a mile from hence, and nearer to *King Alfred's Caſtle*. Aſſer mentions, it is true, only five Counts, the two Sidrocs, Fræna, Harold, and Osbern; perhaps two others of leſs note, might eſcape him. Or ſhall we admit [a] Ingulfus his authority to clear up this difficulty, who, to the King and Five Counts before mentioned, adds King Orguil and Count Fungus? However this be, I muſt here obſerve, that tho' in common ſpeech they are called *The Seven Barrows*, yet the number is by no means ſtinted to *Seven*; nor are there *Seven* more remarkable than the reſt. So that at this day there lies ſomething veiled and hid under this phraſe; and moſt probably the number of the nobility there buried. Theſe Barrows are of various forms. There is one Long, and Two or Three of thoſe, which Dr Stukely calls Celtick, with a ring of earth a little raiſed above the level, and encloſing a piece of ground, with a ſmall eminence in the middle. I counted, within the extent of ſix or ſeven hundred yards, no leſs than twenty in all. I know that [b] Long Barrows ought to be reckoned Daniſh, and probably were deſigned for Kings, but I cannot remove King Baskey from *Wayland Smith* to this place, for the reaſons above given.

a Ingulf. Hiſt. Pag. 35. Ed. Oxon. *b Regios tumulos ad magnitudinem & figuram Carinæ maximæ navis, ex iis quas poſſidebant, fabricatos volunt.* Ol. Worm. Mon. Dan. p. 43.

I can-

Other more ancient Antiquities.

I cannot take my leave of this part of the country, without adding a word or two, concerning ſome antiquities of a different kind, and ſuperiour age, to thoſe already mentioned. And I hope you will the more readily excuſe my detaining you, becauſe there ſeems not to have been ſufficient notice taken of them by others.

The Name of Berkſhire.

The firſt thing that offers itſelf to me, is the Name of this County. By [a] Aſſer who lived neareſt to the time of dividing the land into *Shares* or *Shires*, it is called Bepnocrcipe *from the wood* BERROC, *where*, he ſays, *Box grew in great plenty*. [b] Camden ſays, others chooſe to derive it from a *Bare Oak*, or *Oak disbarked*, under which the natives formerly were uſed to aſſemble, to conſult about publick affairs. He has given the hint likewiſe for deriving it from the *Bibroci* a Colony of the Belgæ, who ſettled in Britain, according to Cæſar, and in this part of it, according to Camden, who is followed herein by later writers. For proof of this, it is urged that *Bibrax*, one of their towns in Gaul is melted down to *Bray* [or rather *Brayne*] which is likewiſe the name of once a conſiderable town in Berkſhire, which gives name to the Hundred. But though the *Bibroci* ſhould be allowed, to have their ſettlement here; yet I ſee no reaſon for rejecting Aſſer's teſtimony. For if it will be allowed me, that they might give their name to the wood *Berroc*, which before the Saxon corruption might be *Biberroc* or *Bibroc*, and probably was a town of theirs, according to the then manner of living; this is all, that I ſhall at preſent contend for. Perhaps it may be ſome ſatisfaction to hear, that the wood *Berroc* was till very

a Vita Alfredi. Pag. 1. *b Britannia in Berkſhire.*

lately

lately in being. For, as I am informed by my worthy friend Bartholomew Tipping of Wolley Esq. a gentleman very well versed in Antiquity, and who was pleased to give me his assistance, throughout the whole course of these enquiries, There is in the parish of Sulham near Reading a place called *Box-grove*, where *Box grew in great plenty*, according to Asser; some adjacent lands in the parish of Tilehurst he has found likewise upon enquiry, abounded with this sort of wood within the memory of several persons. The last remains of Boxgrove were grubbed up not above two years since. So that we need not doubt, but here grew the wood *Berroc*, from whence the whole County was denominated.

Ickenild-Street.

The next that occurs, is ICKENILD-STREET, which went from East to West, confessedly the most obscure of the Four Great Roman Ways; and as hard to be traced through the different Counties, as it's name through the different dialects, which have prevailed in this kingdom. If I can therefore recover it's course, where it is supposed to be lost, I hope I shall do an acceptable piece of service to the Antiquaries. As to the name of this road, though I will not peremptorily deny it's being derived from the ICENI, the inhabitants of Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, and Suffolk, (from whence it seems to begin it's course) which is the general opinion: yet I cannot but wonder, that no antiquary has ever thought of deriving it, from the person, who may reasonably enough be supposed to be the author of it, after the manner of the VIA APPIA, ÆMILIA, FLAMINIA, VALERIA, AURELIA, in other countries. I would not wantonly, and without some grounds, thwart an hypothesis allowed and authorised by so many and great names; but expect so much favour from the learned, as to be excused, if I cannot

help bringing to my mind upon this occaſion, the great AGRICOLA, Veſpaſian's Lieutenant, the firſt who took pains to [a] civilize the barbarous Britains. The moſt emphatical ſyllables of his name, I ſhall ſhew, may be found in This: and I preſume I need not give inſtances of dropping the firſt ſyllable, it being ſo uſual an abbreviation with our natives, that examples are obvious to every one. The common way of writing it in old authors, is indeed ICKENING, ICKENILD, or ICKENELD; as likewiſe RICNING and RICNELD. If ICKENELD, be the true reading, it ſeems to mean only the *Old Icken*, and perhaps may favour my hypotheſis, rather than diſcountenance it: eſpecially if this ſhould be thought a corruption of the Saxons, ignorant of it's true author. If RICNING and RICNELD, be the truer reading, theſe ſeem to come ſtill nearer to Agricola. Other corruptions, ſuch as *Acknil*, *Hackney*, and *Hackington*, mentioned by [b] Dr Plot, are yet wider from the ſame original, but ſuch as etymologiſts meet with every day. But I am perſwaded, that the moſt authentick word for this road, will be found to be ICKLE or RICKLE; at leaſt I find it ſo, in that part of it where I have travelled: and if the names of towns lying upon it, are of any weight in this caſe, as ſurely they muſt be; it will appear to be ſo, in that part of it, where I have not travelled.

In it's weſtward courſe from *Barley* in Hertfordſhire, where antiquaries firſt diſcover it, it goes through a town called ICKLEFORD, in which pariſh is a hamlet called *Romrick*, which ſeems a corruption of *Romanrick* or *Rickle*. Dr Stukely too ſomewhere obſerves, that it is called ICLING-DYKE. Croſſing Buckinghamſhire, it enters Oxfordſhire at Chinner;

[a] See Tacitus his Life of Agricola. [b] Natural Hiſtory of Oxfordſhire p. 315.

through

through which county Dr Plot has traced it to Goring, ſo acroſs the Thames to Strately in Berkſhire, which receives its name from it: and here our learned friend [a] Roger Gale Eſquire gives it up for loſt. But tho' it loſes it's name, it ſtill maintains it's courſe weſtward to *Blubery*, and near that town is viſible enough. I muſt obſerve, that *Blubery* implies ſomething Roman in it's termination; and that there is a Hill at a little diſtance from the road, between Aſton and Blubery, called *Bluberton* or *Bluberdon*, which appears to have been formerly a ſtrong Roman fortification, though the plough has well nigh demoliſhed the works. It is here known by no other name, than, that of the *Great Reading road*. From Blubery it went undoubtedly to Wantage; but whether it took the ſame courſe, as the modern great road, to Upton and Harwell, being called the *Portway*, which is an uſual name for a Roman road; or whether it's true courſe went to Chilton, more on the left hand, under the Hills, and is now loſt in the ploughed fields, till we come near to Lockynge, where is a raiſed way ſtill called ICLETON-MEER, pointing to Wantage; I have not had leiſure to ſatisfy myſelf throughly, as I ought. But immediately after it has paſſed Wantage, it goes by it's true name, ICKLETON-WAY, all under the Hills (as before under the Chiltern through Buckinghamſhire and Oxfordſhire) between them, and Childrey, Sparſholt, Uffington, ſo under the White-horſe Hill, leaving Woolſton and Compton on the right hand, thence to Aſhbury, and Biſhopſton, pointing towards Abery in Wiltſhire, and perhaps to the Devizes; but not at all to Salisbury, as is commonly imagined.

Since I have tranſgreſſed the bounds which I had ſet myſelf,

[a] See his *Eſſay on the Four Great Roman ways*, in Leland's Itinerary Vol. 6.

by going ſo far weſtward; I cannot but recommend to antiquaries the tracing likewiſe of it's Eaſtern courſe, from Barley in Hertfordſhire, where we began. There is ſound ſufficient in the names of towns, if I am not deceived, to conduct us a good way in this enquiry. It is obſerved by Camden, and others, that it points from Barley to ICKLETON, ICALTUNE, or ICALDUNE (for ſo many ways it is written) in Cambridgeſhire, nigh to which ſtood a ſmall Roman City, called *Burrough-Bank*. From thence probably, it may go to ICLINGHAM, in Suffolk, from thence to ICKLEWORTH, in the ſame County. Perhaps it may be met with again by antiquaries at HACKFORD a ſmall village in the County of Norfolk. The next that promiſes any thing to the purpoſe is HICKLING a market town, and poſſibly it may end a little beyond, ſomewhere thereabout not far from the Sea Coaſt. If RICKLING in Eſſex had come within this line in the Maps, I could willingly have taken it into the number; and notwithſtanding the diſtance, it poſſibly may have a relation to the great Road, by means of a Vicinal one branching from it, about Cheſterford in Hertfordſhire.

If my ſuppoſition, that Agricola was the author of this road, be right; it probably was made after the other three, it being the cuſtom of the Romans, as ſoon as a country was reduced into the form of a Province, to employ both their own Souldiers, and the natives, immediately in making of High-ways, for the more commodious intercourſe of the inhabitants. The other Three ſeem deſigned to meaſure the length of Britain, this to promote a communication through the breadth of it, as it afterwards might be found neceſſary. It's being the laſt, may be one reaſon too, why it has retained it's author's name; unleſs we imagine it owing to the Britains grateful remembrance

of

of Agricola's adminiſtration, who ruled in a different manner from his predeceſſors. For we don't find the leaſt relicks of the names of A. Plautius, P. Oſtorius Scapula, A. Didius, Paulinus Suetonius, Petilius Cerealis, Julius Frontinus, Proprætors in Britain before Agricola, in the words *Foſs*, *Erming*, or *Watling*, though perhaps all three were made by one or other of them.

The many roads, that Agricola may be ſuppoſed to have made during eight or nine years reſidence in the Iſland, will account for this name being found belonging to roads, of ſo contrary directions through England, as this we are ſpeaking of, and that which croſſeth Glouceſterſhire, Worceſterſhire, and Warwickſhire, and is likewiſe called [a] ICKLE-STREET.

The Great ICKLE or RICKLE-WAY, for I muſt now beg leave to call it ſo, is to be ſought for, for the moſt part, under that ridge of chalky hills, which runs acroſs England from Eaſt to Weſt. And, I believe, if it was accurately ſurveyed, would afford us a greater number of Roman towns, and fortreſſes, lying upon it, conſidering it's length, than either of the other Three.

Dragon-Hill.

Between the Ickleton-way and White-horſe-hill, under the Horſe, ſtands a large Barrow, which the common people living hereabouts, call DRAGON-HILL; and they have a tradition, that "Here St George kill-"ed the Dragon." The Horſe too is brought into the Legend, as belonging to that Saint, who is uſually pictured on Horſe-back. They ſhew beſides a bare place on the top of it, which is a plain of about fifty or ſixty yards over, where the turf, I don't know by what means, can gain no footing; which they imagine proceeds "from the venemous bloud that iſſued from

a See *Dugdale's Hiſtory of Warwickſhire.* Pag. 568. Ed. Ant.

"the

"the Dragon's wound." Mr Aubrey perhaps is not much out, when he ſays, [a] "Above the ſame Hill, there is another Camp "with ſingle works [meaning Uffington-Caſtle] but very large, "and at about two furlongs diſtance is a Barrow, called Dragon-"Hill; But whether from hence one ſhould conclude this to be "the Tumulus of Uter Pendragon, ſince the conjecture is not "warranted by any direct teſtimony from hiſtory, I leave others "to determine." That it was deſigned for a funeral monument, I ſuppoſe, no one will diſpute, and from it's largeneſs and ſituation near a publick Roman way, it cannot well belong to any other people, except the Britains, who in proceſs of time by receiving the Roman cuſtoms, and by alliances with them, are to be eſteemed as one and the ſame. From it's nearneſs to Uffington Caſtle, one would be inclined to think, it belonged to the Commander of thoſe troops that had their quarters hereabouts.

The fable of St George, as antiquaries will eaſily perceive, is here of late date, and added only in conſequence of the word DRAGON, which is the old name of the Hill. PEND-RAGON, as [b] Mr Baxter proves, is not the proper, but common appellative of a Britiſh King, and ſignifies *Caput Regum, the Chief of Kings*, conſtituted ſuch by the Votes of the reſt, in times of publick diſtreſs. Thus Caſſibelan was choſen by the allies [c] *Pendragon* at the time of Julius Cæſar's invaſion. ARDH-RIG or ARDH-RAG, or ARD-HEER according to the ſame author, is only *Summus Rex* or *Dominus*, meaning the ſame thing with *Pendragon*; this is the *Arviragus* of [d] Juvenal, and the *Arthur* of

[a] *Additions to the Brittania in Berkſhire.* [b] See his *Gloſſarium Antiquitatum Britannicarum*, in the words PENDRAGON and ARVIRAGUS. [c] *Summa imperii, bellique adminiſtrandi, communi conſilio permiſſa eſt Caſſivellano. Noſtro adventu permoti Britanni hunc bello imperioque præfecerant.* Cæſar. Comm. Lib.V. [d] *Regem aliquem capies, vel de temone Britanno Excidet ARVIRAGUS.* Juven. Sat. IV. v.127.

[a] Nennius

[a] Nennius and [b] Geoffrey of Monmouth. [c] And H. Huntingdon ſeems to confirm this, when he calls Arthur, *the warlike Leader of the Souldiers and Kings of Britain.*

After the Roman Legions had left this Iſland, and the land began to be infeſted with Picts and Scots, Vortigern ſeems to have born this title; but when by his vices and ſloth, he had made himſelf incapable of government, and the Saxons, who were called in to the aſſiſtance of the Britains, proved their formidable enemies, the Britiſh chiefs according to cuſtom choſe at ſeveral times a *Pendragon* or *Arthur*; One of which has had the good fortune to be much talked of ſince, though poſterity is not throughly ſatisfied about his proper name; but he is thought by good writers, to be no other, than Ambroſius Aurelianus, mentioned by [d] Gildas and [e] Bede: a Britain of Roman extraction, and related to the Imperial family.

Though Ambroſius Aurelianus is reported by ſome to have been poiſoned, yet it is more probable that he died in battle; which is likewiſe ſaid of King Arthur: and the Saxon Annals, whoſe authority ought to have great weight with us, ſay, that Cerdic the founder of the Weſt-Saxon kingdom, ſlew Natanleod, or Nazaleod, a Britiſh King, with 5000 of his men, in the Year 508. *Natanleod*, according to Mr Baxter, is *Naud an lûdh*, which ſignifies *Populi tutela*, i. e. *The people's refuge*: and the [f] Annals call him *Rex maximus Britannorum*; ſo that he was *Pendragon*

[a] *Eulogium Britanniæ, ſive Hiſtoria Britonum*, inter Hiſt. Brit. Script. XV. Fol. Oxon. 1691. Pag. 114. [b] *De geſtis Regum Britanniæ*. Lib. IX & X. [c] *Arturus belliger illis temporibus DUX MILITUM ET REGUM Britanniæ, contra illos invictiſſime pugnabat*. H. Hunt. Hiſt. p. 313. [d] *Duce Ambroſio Aureliano viro modeſto, qui ſolus forte Romanæ gentis, qui tantæ tempeſtatis colliſione, occiſis in eadem parentibus, purpura nimirum indutis*. Gildas Excid. Brit. pag. 9. Ed. Oxon. [e] *Duce Ambroſio Aureliano viro modeſto, qui ſolus forte Romanæ gentis præfatæ tempeſtati ſuperfuerat, occiſis in eadem parentibus, regium nomen & inſigne ferentibus*. Bed. Eccl. Hiſt. Lib. I. c. 16. [f] *Henric. Huntingdon. Hiſt.* Pag. 312.

for

for that time. I fear it will hardly be found conſiſtent with [a] Chronology to make theſe three to be one and the ſame perſon: and if they are three different perſons, as I rather believe, I hope the reader will not think it too great a favour done to me, to allow one of them to be buried here. For as I am perſwaded from the name, that we muſt here look for the burial place of ſome Britiſh, or Roman, King, and he a chief general; it would be doing injuſtice to my ſubject, not to lay claim to one, or other, of them. The great misfortune is, that it is not mentioned, where the battels were fought, and where they fell. Ambroſius by fabulous writers is ſaid to be buried at Stonehenge in Wiltſhire, about twenty ſix miles from hence; and the neighbouring town of [b] Ambresbury is brought to favour this opinion. But I think it would be no hard matter to prove, that *Dragon-hill* has at leaſt, as good a title to that honour: nor can I believe that there are any better grounds to perſwade us, that Arthur was buried at [c] Glaſtonbury, rather than at this place.

The Britains had not given up their right to theſe parts, till the cloſe of the Sixth Century; as appears from ſome of the warmeſt diſputes, between them, and the Saxons, happening in this neighbourhood, if authors are right in the names of places. One battle was fought ſo late as A. D. 581, when the Britains were conquerors, at Fobnerbyrg or *Wanborough* about five miles from this place. Before that time viz. A.D. 577, Three Britiſh Kings were ſlain at Deorham in Glouceſterſhire, and three towns taken from the Britains, Glouceſter, Bathonceſter, and Cirenceſter, the laſt of which is about 15 miles from this place. A. D.

[a] For all, I think, that we can gather from the confuſed Hiſtory of thoſe times, is, that *Uter* was, if not brother, ſucceſſor to *Ambroſius*, and if not father, predeceſſor at leaſt to *Arthur*; and therefore that theſe were Three ſucceſſive *Pendragons*, or *Arthurs*.
[b] Uſſer. Prim. Eccl. Brit. Pag. 441. [c] See *Camden's Britannia in Somerſetſhire*.

556,

556, Cynric and Ceawlin beat the Britains at Beranbyrig, which, according to Bp Gibſon, is *Barbury Caſtle*, about five miles from hence. The battle of *Mons Badonicus*, ſpoken of by Gildas and Bede, according to the beſt accounts, was fought A. D. 520, which was Arthur's twelfth victory mentioned by Nennius. Camden obſerves that ſome people look for *Mons Badonicus* in Yorkſhire; but if *Baneſdown* near Bath be meant by it, according to him; that is not above thirty five miles from hence; but poſſibly it might be much nearer viz. at *Baydon* a town on a high hill, about three miles from White-Horſe-Hill. I have not yet learnt that there are any ſigns of a battle thereabouts, nor perhaps will Baneſdown afford us any more; but, I believe, the favourers of Baneſdown would have thought themſelves happy, if the modern name had ſo exactly tallied with the old one, as this does, and perhaps no other in England will. To ſpeak truth, I lay no great ſtreſs upon the battel being fought at Baydon; but that it was at a hill about two or three miles from it, and as many from White-Horſe Hill, I cannot think improbable; I mean at *Badbury*, perhaps the mother of modern *Baydon*, where is a ſtrong Roman fortification; and that is the only ſignal remaining, that gives Baneſdown any pretenſions to be the place. There is a Hill of the ſame name in Dorſetſhire, from whence the Hundred is called, contractedly *Badbury*, but in the Saxon Annals Baddanbyrig *Baddanbury*, perhaps corruptly for *Badonbury*, as in the preſent caſe; and this in Latin is no more than *Mons Badonicus*.

I am not ignorant, that Mr [a] Camden obſerves the Vale upon the Avon, under the Hills near Bath, is called by the Britains *Nant Badon*, i. e. *The Vale of Badon*; which made him look

[a] *Britannia* in Somerſetſhire.

for Baydon Hill juſt above it; and that an ancient copy of Gildas, immediately after ſpeaking of *Mons Badonicus*, adds, *Which is near the mouth of the Severn*; but this laſt was probably a note added ſince Gildas's time, by an unskilful geographer, ſince it is not found in other copies of Gildas, nor can Bath or Baneſdown properly be ſaid to ſtand not far from the mouth of the Severn. But I conſider how great an authority I am oppoſing, and therefore leave the queſtion to the judgment of the reader.

The ſtand, which the Britains made in Arthur's days, muſt have been chiefly againſt [a] Cerdic, the founder of the Weſt-Saxon kingdom, and the battle of Badon in particular, whether near Bath, or this place, could not well be fought with any one elſe. The perſon here buried, we have reaſon to think, was ſome Britiſh chief, who fell in one of thoſe laſt ſtruggles for his country's liberty, and in all probability fighting againſt the Weſt-Saxons, whoſe kingdom extended to theſe parts. The Saxon Annals mention only one ſlain by Cerdic, viz. Natanleod or Nazaleod, whoever he was, (whether Ambroſius, Uter, or Arthur, I ſhall not determine,) to whoſe burial place, no town or country, that I know of, ſeems to have any juſt pretenſions, and whom I muſt therefore beg leave to ſuppoſe was the perſon; till further evidence ſhall appear to the contrary.

[a] In chronicis cujuſdam Divionenſis comparent. *Cerdicus cum Arturio confligens ſæpius, ſi uno menſe vinceretur, in alio menſe acrior ſurrexit ad pugnam, tandem Arturius tædio fatigatus, poſt duodecimum annum adventus Cerdici, fidelitate ſibi jurata, dedit ei Aveniam meridianam, & Somariam, quam partem vocavit Cerdicius Viſi Saxoniam.* Leland. Aſſertio Arthuri. pag. 4. I ſuppoſe Higden means this Chronicle when he ſays, *In quibuſdam chronicis legitur, quod Cerdicus ſæpius cum Arturo confligens, ſi ſemel vinceretur, alia vice acrior ſurrexit ad pugnam: tandem Arturus extædiatus poſt XXVI annum adventus Cerdici, fidelitate ſibi jurata, dedit ei Hampteſhiram & Somerſetam, quam partem vocavit Weſtſexam.* Ranulph. Higden Polychron. A°. 544.

We

We muſt not paſs by Wantage, the Capital of the Vale of White-horſe, the ſeat of the Weſt Saxon Kings, and birthplace of K. Alfred. A learned and ingenious [a] writer now living, has given it yet a higher title, even that of a Roman Station. The name he is pleaſed to call it by, is GLEVUM or CLEVUM in the Itinerary, which *Glouceſter* had long been in poſſeſſion of; but he makes that City amends, by giving it another, viz. BLESTIUM; making ARICONIUM, the next in order, to be *Cirenceſter*: "From "whence to GLEVUM or *Wantage*, Fifteen miles; and from "GLEVUM to CORINIUM DOBUNORUM, other-"wiſe DUROCORNOVIUM, (ſo he calls *Dorcheſter* in "Oxfordſhire) Fourteen Miles:" according to Antoninus. I ſhall not take upon me to be umpire in a diſpute, where perſons, ſo much my ſuperiours in learning, may poſſibly be concerned; but will do ſo much juſtice to this Scheme, as to aſſure the world, that Wantage was a Roman town; and perhaps no inconſiderable one, if we may gueſs from a Weſt-Saxon King, and he the Succeſſor of Egbert, having it for his place of abode. It is difficult at this diſtance of time to trace out the Roman remains, in a town that has undergone ſo many alterations, as this has done. Where Roman works have been deſtroyed, to make room for Saxon, and theſe again, for more modern devices. However to an antiquary, I believe, it will appear, that all footſteps of the Roman majeſty are not quite loſt: the *Caſtrum* or Fortification, diſcovering itſelf to me pretty plainly on the South ſide of the brook, encloſing a place called *High-Garden*. The hollow way into the town from Faringdon, with *Groveſtreet*, (which was within the memory of *Wantage.*

[a] N. Salmon LLB, in his *New Survey of England.* 8vo. Lond. 1721. p. 752.

perſons now living a hollow way too) and a little running water, now a Moraſs, dividing the *High-garden* from the *Lower*, make three ſides of an oblong ſquare, and the River the fourth. The ground encloſed may contain about Six acres: and here ſtood the Saxon palace where Alfred was born. On the North ſide of the brook is an encloſure called *Limborough*, implying ſomething Roman in the name, tho', I confeſs, not ecchoing to GLEVUM. But if *Lim*, or *Lim iu*, ſignify *Torrens undæ*, according to Mr Baxter, it may allude to the falling of the water, which before the courſes of the ſprings were turned, as they have been, might be very rapid. In *Limborough* Roman coins are commonly found; I ſaw a braſs one, ploughed up laſt year, of Valens, the reverſe SECVRITAS REIPVBLICÆ. On the outſide of the fortification, between *Limborough*, and the river, was diſcovered many years ſince, the remains of a building, which the inhabitants called *The Cellar*, and *King Alfred's Cellar*; it was paved at bottom with brick, and by the deſcription of it ſhould ſeem to be a Bath.

Of Saxon remains here, the High-Garden may be reckoned One, as containing the King's Palace, tho' originally Roman. Between Limborough and the brook is a Cloſe, called *Court-Cloſe*; and another little piece of ground, in ſome modern writings, which I have ſeen, called *Paddock's More*, *alias Pallet's-More*; which I ſuſpect to be a corruption of *Palace-More*. I am indebted, for moſt of theſe notices, to an ingenious [a] friend living upon the ſpot.

The country about Wantage was probably, in great part, Royal demeſne, and the patrimony of the Weſt-Saxon Kings, till granted away by degrees to favourites, and to religious

[a] Mr Edward Towſey, Apothecary in Wantage.

houſes;

houſes; as we may gather from the names of places hereabouts. About a mile eaſt of Wantage is *King's Grove*, a Common ſo called; a mile on the other ſide is *King's Letcombe*; beſides theſe *Kingſton Liſle*; and *Uffington*, which is commonly taken for *Offa's-town*, and is indeed wrote *Offentone* in Domeſday, and was once no doubt part of his territories, for Mr Camden in Berkſhire, writes from an old Book, *After that Kenulph was overthrown, whatſoever lay under his juriſdiction from the town of Wallingford, in the South part from Ickenild-ſtreet as far as Eſſebury* [or Aſhbury] *and in the North part as far as the river Thames, King OFFA ſeized upon.* Though after all, it may ſignify no more than *Kingſton*: for [a] Hen. Huntingdon, ſays, that *Uffa* King of the Eaſt Angles was had in ſuch eſteem after his death, that ſucceeding Kings were called from him *Uffings*. *Woolſton* a town ſtanding juſt under White-Horſe hill, called in ſome old writings (which I have ſeen in the hands of the preſent worthy Lord of the Manour, Bartholomew Tipping Eſq.) *Wulferithſton*, ſeems to have been denominated from ſome Saxon nobleman, to whom probably it was given, as a reward of his valour, at the battle of Aſhdown. I find in the Saxon [b] Annals *Wulfricus* and *Wulfredus* attendants upon King Alfred in his wars, the former ſtiled *Regius Strator & Comes Britannicus*, probably the ſame Officer with *Maſter of the Horſe*, he died, or was ſlain, A. D. 897. The latter is called *Dux in Hamtunſcyre*, and died of the plague near the ſame time: I think this laſt moſt likely to be the perſon.

[a] *Regnum primus tenuit UFFA, à quo reges Orientalium Anglorum UFFINGAS appellant.* Hiſt. Lib. II. pag. 315. [b] Ðẏ ilcan ȝeꞃe. ꝼoꞃð-ꝼeꞃð ꝼulꝼꞃic cẏninȝeꞃ hoꞃꞃ-þeȝen. ꞃe þæꞃ ꝼealh ȝeꞃeꝼa:. Saxon Annal. Pag. 99. ꝼulꝼꞃeð ealðoꞃ-man on Hamtunꞃcẏꞃe. Pag. 97.

The

Sagbury and Uffington Caſtles.

The lately mentioned [a] author took the hint, for fixing GLEVUM ſomewhere in the neighbourhood of Wantage, from a fortification taken notice of by Mr Aubrey, as being about a mile from Wantage upon the hill overlooking the Vale juſt above Letcombe, from whence it is commonly called *Letcombe-Caſtle*, but the more knowing inhabitants inform me, that the true name is *Sagbury*, I ſuppoſe, from the Saxon word Secge ſignifying a *Soldier*. It is a large entrenchment containing about twenty five acres, and was undoubtedly the Summer quarters of the garriſon at Wantage. But I muſt ſubmit it to the further enquiry of that learned gentleman, ſince this fortification was his only reaſon for looking for GLEVUM hereabouts, whether he had not better have choſen *Uffington-Caſtle*, above the White-Horſe, for his *Medius Terminus* between ARICONIUM and DUROCORNOVIUM. I believe upon examination he would find the diſtances anſwer more truly. For though the whole number of miles from Cirenceſter to Dorcheſter, correſponds pretty well; being about Twenty nine, or Thirty, in all: yet the diſtance from Wantage to Dorcheſter is too ſmall, being about Nine inſtead of Fourteen, and from Wantage to Cirenceſter too large, being Twenty inſtead of Fifteen. But Uffington Caſtle, which is five miles nearer to Cirenceſter, than Wantage is, and upon the ſtrait Ickleton road too, (which ſeems to be the way moſt known to the Romans, though there is another now, a little nearer) muſt conſequently be Fifteen from Cirenceſter, and Fourteen from Dorcheſter, exactly according to the numbers in the Itinerary.

[a] N. Salmon LLB. *New Survey of England.*

There

Some other Antiquities.

There are ſeveral antiquities beſides in theſe parts, as yet unobſerved by others, which I have neither leiſure, nor inclination to treat of at preſent. Such as a fortification on Childrey-hill, between Uffington-Caſtle and Sagbury, probably of later date, than the times of the Romans, from whence begins a ſmall boundary, directing it's courſe to Lamborne, which is called *Eaſt-Ditch*: as likewiſe another much larger boundary beginning near Sagbury, and running for ſeveral miles, on the brow of the Hills eaſtward, as I obſerved it in my road to Blubery. Theſe therefore I ſhall leave to the conſideration of others: what I here communicate to the publick, having been only a ſeaſonable diverſion from the fatigue of a much larger work; which, ſince my firſt entrance upon it, has continually grown upon my hands, and found me full employment for ſeveral years laſt paſt: and I fear there is enough left for one or two more to come.

The preſent Eſſay I undertook, not only out of a deſire, which I have always had, to do juſtice to the memory of that inimitable Prince, whoſe affairs are the chief ſubject of it, but likewiſe to induce other perſons of more leiſure, and greater abilities, to follow the ſame deſign. For if one County, to which I have chiefly confined myſelf, and only a ſmall part of that too, has afforded ſuch a variety of antiquities, ſcarce taken notice of by others; and to the knowledge of which I was at firſt led by accident only: how much greater things may be expected from gentlemen of learning, that ſhall ſet out with a fixed reſolution, of purſuing the like enquiries through the whole kingdom.

If I have not tired your patience, I fear, I have at leaſt exceeded the bounds of an Epiſtle, and ſhall therefore take my leave

leave by assuring you, that, though I am desirous, the world should look upon this small offering, as a tribute due to publick spirit, rather than the return of a private friendship; yet I shall never let slip any opportunity of professing, how much I am,

SIR,

Your obliged and obedient

Humble Servant

Trin. Coll. Oxon.
Dec. 21. 1738.

FRANCIS WISE.

POSTSCRIPT.

WHILST theſe Sheets were printing, the learned and truly noble Earl of Oxford, whoſe greateſt pleaſure is to promote every enquiry, that may tend to illuſtrate our Engliſh Hiſtory, hearing of my deſign, was pleaſed to communicate to me the following extract from a MS. in his own ineſtimable library; which coming too late to be inſerted in it's proper place, I beg leave to add here. "From this pleaſant town "of Farindon in Barkſhire Travellers may go two ways to Bti- "ſtow, either by Leachlade in Gloceſterſhire, or by Hyworth in "Wiltſhire. In the way to Hyworth from Farringdon, which is "accompted 4 miles, you ſhall go by Coltſwell, where Sr George "Pratt (now defunct) hath built a noble houſe with Curious "Gardens, ſeated on the ſide of a hill, which comands as no- "ble a proſpect. Here I may take occaſion to ſpeake of that "Ancient Land marke or remarcable work of Antiquity, which "gives name to our Country the Vale of White Horſe; for in "the way betwixt Faringdon and Hyworth, ſome 5 or 6 miles "diſtante, you have the beſt proſpect of the White Horſe, cut "in the ſide of a white chalky hill, a mile above Uffington. "The Manger, as they caleth it, or ſides and bottome, where "this Horſe is cutt, is now in the poſſeſſion of my loving friend "and neighbor, Mr Wiſeman of Sparſwell's Court: and ſome "that dwell hereabout have an obligacion upon their Lands, to "repair and cleanſe this Land marke, or elſe in time it may "turne green, like the reſt of the hill, and be forgotten.

"As touching the originall of this eminent Landmark, which "gives its name to one of the beſt Vales of England; I heard

"my Father ſay, who was a man well read in Antiquityes, that "he thought it was Hengiſt, the Saxon conqueror, who in re- "membrance of his exploits, this being his Armes or Creſt to "them, cauſed this figure to be cut here. This Hengiſt came in- "to England A. D. 450. being ſent for by Vortiger, to aſſiſt him "in his warres." *Thomas Baskervile Esq. of Sunningwell in Berk-ſhire, his Journal of his Travels over great part of England, in the years 1677, 1678. Folio.*

By this the reader will ſee, not only that the White Horſe is no imaginary thing, as Camden would perſwade us, but what have been the ſentiments of learned men about it, with regard to it's antiquity. I had been informed likewiſe of what this gentleman advances, viz. "That lands in this neighbourhood "were charged with the expence of Scouring the Horſe;" and it is inconceivable how ſuch a notion could prevail, had there not been formerly ſome ground for it. But upon the ſtricteſt inquiſition, I could find no ſuch tenure at preſent. Nor is it to be wonder'd at, conſidering the migration of lands from family to family; it being the intereſt of every owner at the time of alienation, to diſburthen ſuch lands, as much as poſſible, of all incumbrances.

a This Thomas Baskervile Esq. of Bayworth in the pariſh of Sunningwell near Abingdon, was a gentleman of learning and curioſity, eſpecially in his younger years, he was commonly known to the ſtudents of Oxford, by the nick-name of *The King of Jeruſalem*, and died about the year 1705, Aged 90 and upwards, as appears from a Print of him. His Father was Hannibal Baskervile formerly of Brazen College in Oxford. See ſome account of him in *The Life of Mr Antony a Wood*, written by himſelf, and printed by Mr Hearne at the end of *Tho. Caii Vindiciæ Acad. Oxon.* Vol. 2. Pag. 516.